





C. W. K. Hacker



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Robert Walter  
1867

BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR.

“ I have not flattered him, but took him to life,—sitting so far, and having no better light.”

LORD BACON—*Dedication of Life of Henry VII.*

Ὡκηρον μὲν σεβω, θαυμαζωδε  
Βαῤῥόρου, καὶ φιλῶ Ταίλωρον.

PARR—*Note to Spital Sermon.*

HECCLE.B  
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# BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR

HIS PREDECESSORS

CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS.

A Biography.

BY THE

REV. ROBERT ARIS WILLMOTT,

INCUMBENT OF BEAR WOOD, BERKS.

AUTHOR OF LIVES OF THE ENGLISH SACRED POETS.

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LONDON:

JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

MDCCCXLVII.



TO  
JOHN WALTER, ESQ.

Of Bear Wood,

AN ADMIRER OF THE GENIUS, AND A REVERER OF THE  
PIETY, OF JEREMY TAYLOR ;

WHO, AMID THE CLAMOUR OF ENEMIES AND SILENCE OF FRIENDS,  
ASSERTED THE GREAT PRINCIPLE OF CHRISTIAN TOLERATION,

AND THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT ;

WHO TAUGHT BY PRECEPT, AND ENFORCED BY EXAMPLE,

THE DIGNITY AND BLESSEDNESS OF PROTECTING THE POOR,

AND OF CONSECRATING EVERY CITY AND VILLAGE WITH

THE BIBLE, THE PRAYER-BOOK, AND THE ALTAR ;

*This Biography is Enscribed,*

WITH GRATEFUL RECOLLECTIONS AND SINCERE ESTEEM,

BY THE AUTHOR.





## PREFACE.

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THE principal figure of the subject must appear in the midst of the picture, under the chief light, to distinguish it from the rest. The remark comes from Fresnoy, and illustrates the biography it opens. My object was to present a picture, historical and domestic, in which the strongest lights should fall on one figure—Bishop Taylor; some of his most illustrious forerunners, contemporaries, and successors being grouped around him—representatives of that majestic company of devout and learned men,

“ With beaming eye,  
That lifted, speaks its commerce with the sky,”

who adorned our Church and literature during two hundred years.

Rejoicing with Warburton to boast my veneration for two names—Hooker and Taylor—whose virtues would atone for a bad age, as their abilities might have made the worst age the most prosperous, I found in the task no ordinary charm. Nor has it suffered the exhaustion of frequent pens. With the exception of the *Memoirs* by Archdeacon Bonney and Bishop Heber, no effort, I think, has been made to illustrate the fortunes or genius of Taylor. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, Mr. Wheeldon, a clergyman in Hertfordshire, compiled a book with the attractive title of a “*Life of Taylor*,” but consisting entirely of extracts from his writings, and a reprint of the funeral sermon by Bishop Rust. Mr. Bonney’s *Memoir* is of a higher class, containing much pleasing information, and many critical remarks, just and valuable.

When Heber commenced his elaborate republication of Taylor’s collective works, Mr. Bonney contributed the fruit of his maturer researches, and to promote the success of a new biography, withdrew his own. Heber’s *Life of Taylor* is, therefore, the only introduction to his works to which the inquiring student can obtain access. Perhaps that expression

promises too much. Forming a portion of fifteen volumes, and not to be procured in a detached form, it may be said to be within sight rather than within reach. The prefaces, accompanying abridgments of his works, with some modifications, come within the same description.

The present Biography is an attempt to bring the subject of it nearer to the eye and hand. From the fulness of materials, it had a tendency to be large, but I have endeavoured to bestow sufficient time and thought to make it small. Whatever be the defects of execution,—and I wish they were fewer,—it claims the merit of originality. The occurrences of a life must continue the same under every pen; the outline cannot be changed; and the latest narrator may only hope to fill up the deficiency, or lighten the obscurity of his predecessors, by industry in collecting information, or happiness in applying it. The reader, who is familiar with Heber's history of Taylor, will find in the following pages some circumstances untold before, and see facts, already communicated, placed in a new light, and guided to a different conclusion. The author hopes, however, that the pic-

turesque intention of his book will not be forgotten ; all elaborate analysis of treatises or doctrines lay beyond the design, which only attempts to give the spirit of Taylor's genius. For the same reason, it has not been thought necessary to comment upon his publications with the minute accuracy of a catalogue. A portrait of the Christian and author was the aim of his biographer.

The opinions advanced respecting the religious, intellectual, and personal character of Taylor, are the result of an independent, and certainly not an indifferent or hasty examination of his conduct and works. The writer is conscious of his presumption in differing, on several occasions, from Bishop Heber and Mr. Hallam. His dissent is, however, accompanied by reasons. And, perhaps, he may plead a long and affectionate intimacy with the illustrious Bishop himself, in the relation of disciple and Master, as an apology for confidence. Accustomed from early youth to sit at his feet, he has watched, if the figure may be allowed, each varying expression upon that countenance of beauty and peace, which looks out from every solemn and learned page. He, whose eye constantly turns to one portrait,

however rude his knowledge of art, may sometimes give a truer account of it than the most accomplished spectator, with all the galleries of Europe in his remembrance.

The author has not presumed to make even this little venture, without seeking to borrow from the riches of those who went before him; but he has cheerfully acknowledged his debts; being silent only where the obligation was due to himself. In two or three instances, a thought or illustration, thrown out in other directions, has been recalled and re-issued.

I cannot but consider myself fortunate in the selection of Taylor. Of our elder writers, he is the only one who has taken a firm and lasting hold of the popular mind. The *Holy Living and Dying* is associated with the fire-side and the pillow. But they who know him by that his loveliest work, enjoy an imperfect view of the eloquence, erudition, and piety which compose the catholic grandeur of his doctrines and instruction. He, above all divines in our language, illustrates the admirable remark of Southey, that undue importance given to particular points—the contemplation of a part for the whole—is the common origin of sects; while he also shows how, at the moment

when others split the rays of truth, and see only one of the prismatic colours, he and all the sincere members of the Universal Church live and grow in the light.

If, therefore, this portrait of Taylor, as Priest and Author, Bishop and Saint, should lead any reader to a closer and more reverent familiarity with his life and writings, some good seed will have been scattered, even though it fall by the way-side.

Northcote said that a painter ought to bring something out of nature never observed before—something like that for which, in mechanical science, a patent would be granted. This Taylor did in the literature of theology. He found the rich veins of the jewel in what, to vulgar eyes, is nothing but a pebble. It was remarked of Shakspeare,\* that by getting all his pictures leisurely into the mind—absorbing them, as it were, into the circulation—the reader might almost give out light in the dark, being steeped in an atmosphere of brilliance. If this language be too glowing for the poet, it may be transferred to that preacher who represented him in our prose ; who, to imagination scarcely less splendid, added holier wisdom,

\* By Dr. Arnold.



and shed over both the lustre of that City which has no need of the sun, and into whose gates the eye of Faith already sees him entering, with “the glory and honour of the nations.”\*

In sending forth this volume into cloud or sunshine, as the gale may happen to take it, the reflection is cheering, that commendations of ancient authors are usually received with favour; perhaps, as Shenstone said of fine days, because people can praise them without envy. “Admiration, whose eyes are ever weak, stands still to gaze upon great things acted far off, but when they are near, walks slightly away, as from familiar objects.” In this instance, assuredly, there will be reason for thankfulness, if the fame of the dead shall prevail by example more than the reputation of the living.

\* Rev. xxi. 26.

*St. Catherine's, Bear Wood,  
December 1, 1846.*



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### ADDITIONAL NOTES.

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Playford's *Harmonia Sacra*, B. i., London, 1726, p. 10, contains, as I have been told, a translation, by Taylor, of Job's curse, set to music by Henry Purcell, beginning, "Let the night perish, cursed by the morn;" but I have never seen the book.

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I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev. R. C. Jenkins, the Incumbent of Christ Church, Turnham Green, for the interesting reference to Sir John Hayward, at p. 250.



## ERRATA.

Page 66, for "greatest *man* of," read "greatest *name* of."

— 89, for "*Petty Cuzy*," read "*Petty Cury*."

— 220, after "His biography, like Shakspeare's," insert  
"is."





# BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR;

HIS PREDECESSORS, CONTEMPORARIES, AND  
SUCCESSORS.

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## CHAPTER I.

Introductory remarks. — II. English prose, its rude beginning; Mandeville, Wickliff, and Chaucer. Sir Thomas More's Life of Edward the Fifth. — III. Singular aids to the preacher; block-books and stories. — IV. Ecclesiastical sketches during the 15th and 16th centuries, taken from contemporary poets; the Pardoner, the Limitor, and the Good Parson. — V. The suppression of itinerancy not immediately beneficial.

IT has been remarked, that while a national collection of pictures should be composed of the works of great masters, it is necessary, if we would understand and appreciate their merits, to examine those who immediately preceded and taught them. We must contemplate Cimabue before Raffaele. The caution is equally applicable to all the branches of learning and literature. The picturesque beauty of the Shaksperian drama winds out, with a gathered splendour, from the enveloping mist of the rude Morality. There is, however, some danger of

exaggerating the charms which industry may discover in the early productions of imagination or art. A single flower, blooming "in the dry desert of a thousand lines," has allured many footsteps in search of gardens of imagery that never were sown. The student of our elder theology is frequently conscious of the same fascination. It was observed by Brown, in reference to the theory of sensation, that the sound scarcely heard in the tumult of the day, is capable of affecting us powerfully if it recur in the dead of the night. The vehement applause bestowed upon our ancestors in sacred learning, may sometimes be explained upon a similar principle. The voice that might have floated by us unheeded if heard in the bustle of modern literature, falls upon the ear with a peculiar sweetness, when it steals over it in the night, or rather in the still and grey dawn of our imagination, our learning, and our taste.

But if there be the peril of profusion, there is also the peril of parsimony in praise. The literature of our church has suffered chiefly from the last. It may only excite a smile to find the Italian Andres,<sup>1</sup> in his elaborate review of universal literature, assuming the inferiority of English eloquence to the declamation of France ; and—while discovering in Bourdaloue, Bossuet, and Massillon, the intellectual descendants of Plato, Demosthenes, and Xenophon—to see him concentrating the theological

<sup>1</sup> Dell' Origine, Progressi, e Stato attuale d'ogni Letteratura, &c.

claims of England in the verbosity of Tillotson, and the argument of Sherlock; a livelier feeling of astonishment is awakened by the ignorance of Chateaubriand,<sup>1</sup> in numbering among the writers whose works afford no profit or pleasure in the perusal, "Wolsey, Cranmer, and Joseph Hall the preacher;" and our wonder gathers in depth when we hear Warton affirming that the Satires of Hall have outlived his sermons at court; and Hallam<sup>2</sup> dismissing the discourses of Donne with an intimation of their unworthiness to be rescued from oblivion.

The history of our prose begins in the 14th century, with the traveller Mandeville, a name frequently employed to point an epigram against fiction. Wickliff is not to be mentioned without reverence; and Chaucer transfused into his prose some of the colouring life of his poetry. Then came Pecoock, the simple and plain; the vivacious Latimer; the vigorous More; the translators of the Bible, wonderful in music, dignity, and grace; Sir Philip Sidney, the romantic and brave; Raleigh, the adventurous and unhappy; Hooker, the majestic and solemn. Ben Jonson records, with admiration, the elder Wyatt, Elyot, and Gardiner; Sir Nicholas Bacon, singular, and almost alone in the beginning of Elizabeth's time; Lord Essex, noble and high; Sir Henry Saville, grave and lettered; and Sir Edwin Sandys, accomplished in every gift. Hallam commends Sir Thomas More's Life of

<sup>1</sup> *Essai sur la Littérature Anglaise*, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> *Introduction to Literature of Europe*, iii. 124.

Edward V., written about 1509, as appearing to be the first example of good English language, pure and perspicuous, well-chosen, without vulgarisms or pedantry:<sup>1</sup> he instances the account of Jane Shore, as a model of elegant narration; but he seems disposed to receive Puttenham as our earliest writer of measured prose.

The oldest specimen of English, which has been stamped with the faintest impress of chronology, is the translation of a passage in St. Augustine, assigned to the interval between 1244 and 1258 ; but a proclamation, issued by Henry III. in 1258, appears to be the first example of English bearing a distinct and positive date.<sup>2</sup> It was not until the middle of the 14th century that the lineaments of our prose began to assume the shape of harmony. During a considerable portion of the reign of Edward III., French continued to be the language of the court, and the educated classes in general, having long before superseded Latin in private correspondence. Boys were taught to render Latin into French; while in colleges, the use of the English tongue seems to have been generally checked, and sometimes rigorously prohibited.

Trevisa's Version of Higden's Polychronicon is referred to 1385 ; it issued from the press of Caxton in 1482. It is curious to find the famous printer, whose own style and expression are not marked by precision, apologising for the introduction

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to Literature, i. 621.

<sup>2</sup> Hallam, i. 61.

of various changes of the rude old English, upon the plea that the words would not then be understood. Wickliff was at this time preparing his translation of the Bible, which is supposed to have been completed in 1383. A recent writer has ventured to express an opinion, that the English of Wickliff is harsh and difficult, as compared with Mandeville; a censure which he still further heightens by affirming that his style, though occasionally emitting gleams of animation, is everywhere coarse and slovenly. The criticism seems to be incorrect. Even in fertility and grace, the reformer surpasses the traveller. It has always been admitted that Wickliff's translation of the Scriptures enriched our language. The version of Tyndale preceded it, indeed, in point of publication; but many copies of Wickliff's labours existed in MS., and had acquired a certain diffusion. Judging from a slight acquaintance with his translation of the New Testament, it seems to be impossible not to feel surprised and awed by the wonderful happiness of diction with which the dignity of the original has been frequently preserved. The simple pictures of primitive holiness and truth are encircled with a becoming shade, by the massive and antique framework of his language. Wickliff belonged to a strange and gigantic race of men, long extinct, and holding, in the history of religion, a rank in some respects parallel to that of Plutarch's heroes in the history of war.<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas More,

<sup>1</sup> See Foster's *Miscellaneous Works*, i. 436.

it should be observed, asserts, as from personal knowledge, that Bibles written in English were in the hands of many devout people, and by the permission of their respective bishops, before the days of Wickliff. This statement may seem to contradict the opinion commonly received ; but the assurance of More must be treated with respect, and Southey considers it to be conclusive upon the subject.<sup>1</sup>

Chaucer, the founder of our poetry, is never to be forgotten among the fathers of our prose. The fluency, the vivacity, the naturalness of his verse, were adapted to animate that form of expression which, having rhythm, is destitute of metre. To Mandeville, however, we still return, as to our first prose author. Hallam assigns the composition of his singular work to 1356, at which period he arrived in England, after an absence of thirty-four years in the most interesting regions of the world.

It will not be supposed that the marvellous tales of the traveller, or the nobler themes of Wickliff, produced any extensive influence upon the popular taste. The fountains of knowledge were chiefly enclosed within monastic gardens. Even there the water flowed in a scanty stream. Leland furnishes a meagre list of books in college libraries, down to a period immediately preceding the Reformation.<sup>2</sup> The reign of Edward IV. is reckoned one of the

<sup>1</sup> Book of the Church, 204.

<sup>2</sup> Hunter on Monastic Libraries, 1831.



barrenest spots in our literary annals.<sup>1</sup> It was not till 1474 that Caxton established his first printing press in Westminster Abbey. Burnet remarks, that before the Reformation few sermons were delivered except in Lent. This is only partially correct. Dr. Lichfield, rector of All Saints, Thames Street, who died in 1447, left three thousand and eighty-three sermons written by his own hand ; and the Constitutions of John de Thoresby, Archbishop of York, made about 1360, direct the parochial clergy to 'preach frequently, and to explain the articles of faith in the English tongue.<sup>2</sup> Among the helps which the early preachers possessed, the block-books, the forerunners of the press, deserve to be mentioned. Of one of these an interesting description has been given.<sup>3</sup> It consisted of "a series of skeleton sermons, ornamented with wood-cuts," to warm the imagination, and strewed with texts, to assist the memory of the preacher. About the year 1475, a Latin volume appeared in Germany, written by a Dominican friar of Basil, whose date is fixed in 1418. It comprised a collection of sermons upon the saints, and a miscellany of examples. Among the histories are, the Friar's Tale of Chaucer, and the original of one of the stories of Boccacio. His *Sermones de tempore* are equally curious, and contain the outline of Parnel's beautiful narrative of the Hermit. So singular, to adopt the sentiments

<sup>1</sup> Hallam, i. 257.

<sup>2</sup> Anthony Harmer, quoted in Eccles' Biography, i. 438.

<sup>3</sup> Jackson's History of Wood Engraving.

of Warton,<sup>1</sup> are the revolutions of taste, and so capricious the modes of composition, that a Latin Homily-book of a German monk, in the 15th century, is to be referred to for the rude outlines of popular poetry and romance in Italy and England.

The liveliest pictures of the clergy during these dark ages of our literature and taste are found in the contemporary sketches of the poets. It will not be supposed that they present any but the prominent features of the order, or are guided by an acute sensitiveness of conscience in the arrangement of their light and shade. I shall endeavour to compose from their works a page of ecclesiastical history not hitherto written, and illustrating the condition of the church in England—under one aspect, at least—during a considerable portion of the 14th and 15th centuries.

Langland has been called our earliest original writer in verse ; and he opens his “*Vision of Piers Ploughman*” with a remarkable picture of contemporary society. Pre-eminent above the rest are seen the rich and luxurious idlers—the jugglers and Roberds knaves—(malefactors of the 14th century)—pilgrims and palmers travelling to Rome, and hermits, with hooked staves, trooping to Walsingham. But the four orders of friars attract his sharpest scrutiny and indignation. He represents

<sup>1</sup> History of Poetry—Dissertation iii.—On the *Gesta Romanorum*.



them adulterating the sincerity of the Gospel to promote their own designs—

“ Preaching the people for profit of themselves.”

Their governing passion was a love of splendid apparel; “ covetise of copes ” is the subject of untiring invective from this poetical reformer. The “ Vision of Piers Ploughman ” was probably composed about 1362. Lydgate, writing seventy years later, records the same luxury of costume; and describes the clergy laying aside the “ sharp hairès,” that they might array themselves in

“ Copes of purple and sanguine,  
Gownes of scarlet furrèd with ermène.”

Langland and Lydgate were monks; one, belonging to a monastery in the west of England, near the Malvern Hills; the other, a member of the Benedictine monastery of St. Edmund's Bury, and subsequently prior of Hatfield Brodhock.

It may excite surprise to recognise in her own household the bitterest satirists of a corrupt church; but Gray has observed, that, while the feuds and bickerings between the several orders were perpetual and irreconcilable, every disputant retained a profound respect for the particular order to which he belonged. Lydgate, it has been seen, followed Langland, at an interval of seventy years, with his “ Fall of Princes; ” but since he was then a man of threescore, his eye must have almost reverted to the period which his predecessor described. We

see the monk of the Malvern Hills painting one figure with hearty good will : this was the Pardoner —i.e., a person licensed to sell papal indulgences, and who occupies a niche in all the historical or satirical sketches of those times. He lives under the pencil of Chaucer, who commenced his “ Canterbury Tales ” within a few years of the close of the 14th century, and of whom Langland was the contemporary and Lydgate the disciple. He describes the clear, loud voice with which the Pardoner sung his sayings in church with all the fluency of recollection,—

“ For I can all by rote that I tell,”—

sprinkling a few Latin words over his discourse, to give it a tinge of learning. Chaucer uses the word, to *saffron* it,—saffron being employed to impart colour as well as flavour. The occupation must have been a flourishing one. Chaucer’s Pardoner declares, with exultation, that he was accustomed to gain annually “ a hundred mark ” by his preaching, which, reckoning the mark at 13s. 4d., would produce an enormous income for that age. The portrait, drawn by Chaucer, shows him stretching his neck over the pulpit, east and west, towards the people. His subject was always the same—

“ Of avarice and of swiche cursednesse,  
Is all my preaching.”

These religious addresses were frequently made the vehicles of personal animosity and reproof towards those whom the preacher disliked. It is easy to

imagine what a traffic of scandal might be carried on by lawless men, in their periodical circuits through the towns and villages of England. This feature in their character did not escape the eye of our liveliest delineator of scenery and manners. The reader of Chaucer's "House of Fame" will recollect an agreeable episode, in which the poet describes the abode of Rumour, having as many entrances as there are green leaves upon trees in summer, the roof being pierced with numberless holes to let out the sound; the doors are open day and night. Into this House, the poet is transported by an eagle, who sets him down upon the floor. The scene is full of strange variety. A crowd perpetually wanders to and fro, every one whispering in the ear of his neighbour, or proclaiming aloud some new accident. Here we find the Pardoner in a numerous company of brethren:—

" This house at all times  
Was full of shipmen and pilgrimes,  
With scrips bretful<sup>1</sup> of leasings  
Intermeddled with tidings;  
*And eke alone by themselve,*  
*A many thousand times twelve*  
*Saw I eke of these Pardoners,*  
Curroures,<sup>2</sup> and eke of messangers,  
With boxes crammed full of lies  
As ever vessel was with lees."

In the Prologue to the "Canterbury Tales," the Pardoner is drawn with all the vivid and minute truthfulness of Vandyck. His yellow hair hangs

<sup>1</sup> Quite full.

<sup>2</sup> Couriers.

smooth, like flax ; his locks, so thick that they are said to be suspended by ounces, are scattered over his shoulders in shreds—

“ But hode for jolite, ne were he non,  
For it was trussed up in his wallet.”

His eyes flash with a quick light; his wallet, crammed with pardons from Rome, is fastened before him; while the badge of his profession is sewed into the cap upon his head. This is the *Vernicle*, a copy in miniature of a picture of the Saviour, supposed to have been miraculously imprinted upon a handkerchief preserved in the church of St. Peter, at Rome.<sup>1</sup> The Limitor, a friar licensed to beg within a certain district, shares in the graphic satire bestowed upon the Pardoner. Chaucer has introduced him among the Canterbury Pilgrims, with “*his tippet stuffed full of pins to give fair wives:*”—

“ For ther was he not like a cloisterere,  
With thread-bare cope, as is a poor scolere,  
But he was like a maister, or a pope,  
Of double-worsted was his semi-cope,<sup>2</sup>  
That round was as a belle out of presse;  
Somewhat he lisped for in wantonesse,  
To make his English swete upon his tonge;  
And in his harping, when that he had ronge;  
His eyen twinkled in his hed aright,  
As dou the sterres in a frosty night.  
This witty limitour was cleped Huberd.”

His theological acquirements were of the same extent and degree as the Pardoner's. Latimer mentions a Limitor of the Grey Friars, who had preached

<sup>1</sup> Tyrwhit.

<sup>2</sup> A half, or short cloak.

so often his single discourse upon the Commandments, that he was commonly known by the appellation of "Friar John Ten Commandments."<sup>1</sup>

The pastoral economy of the church in England is also satirised, with more than Chaucer's freedom, by a parochial clergyman, who held an office under Henry VIII. This was the famous John Skelton, rector of Diss, in Norfolk, at the beginning of the 16th century. His poems supply some corroborative testimony to the truth of Latimer's invectives against ecclesiastical bribery, corruption, and sloth. The poet and the preacher described the same state of society, having been born within a few years of each other. Skelton upbraids the bishops for their neglect of preaching, which he attributes to idleness and ignorance. The priests were still more degraded—some were unable to decline their name; some could scarcely read. These characteristics he applies to the parochial clergy in general. In the midst of all this intellectual debasement, luxury and extravagance flourished. Skelton's portraiture of a rude priest suddenly changed into a bishop by the wand of the Pope, has the rich colours of an illuminated design in the corner of old manuscripts. He introduces him riding,

" Upon a mule,  
With gold all betrayed  
In purple and paule belapped;  
Some hattèd and some capped,  
Rychely and warm bewrapped,

<sup>1</sup> Sermons: Third Sunday after Trinity.

God wot to their great paynes  
 In rochettes of fyne raynes,  
 Whyte as molowes mylke ;  
 Theyr tabertes of fine silke,  
 Theyr styrops of myxt gold begared,  
 There may no cost be spared."

The interior of priestly dwellings exhibited equal splendour; and the "bishop on his carpet," sitting at home, was an image of voluptuous indulgence at the close of the 15th century.

But it is for the wandering preachers that Skelton reserves the sharpest chastisement of his fluent and remorseless satire. The whole race of Limitors he envelopes in one definition of falsehood; the preaching of the friars he refers altogether to their personal aggrandizement—

" Preching for his grote,  
 Flattering for his cote."

He alludes to the injury which the holders of parochial cures sustained from these mendicant divines, who by their "plasaunt style" intercepted the offerings that should have come to the curate.<sup>1</sup> Skelton would never have suggested the Good Parson to Chaucer, who preceded him only about forty years. In the pulpit, according to traditional accounts, he was a Menôt, or a Maillard; if he did not rather recal the famous priest of Meudon. Yet he was a person of eminence in his time.

<sup>1</sup> See Colin Clout, one of the most fearless outbreaks of indignation and invective to be found in the varied collections of our literature.

The good old Caxton marvelled at his knowledge of poets and orators; while Erasmus congratulated Prince Henry upon possessing the light of Skelton to illuminate England, and show the way to the sacred fountains.<sup>1</sup>

We should, however, err in concluding that the erratic extravagance of the Pardoner and his rivals perfectly represented the spirit of religious teaching that preceded the Reformation. From many a sequestered hamlet ascended the earnest prayer of an erroneous, but a fervent faith. Chaucer, who has painted, with so much felicity of scorn, the wandering friar, in his pilgrimage of lucre, has, in the same poem, drawn a picture of a minister of the Gospel, which has certainly never been excelled in simple beauty and expressive pathos. His own love of the studious and reflective temper of Christian wisdom, is shown in his sketch of the Oxford scholar, having no benefice, and depending upon the assistance of his friends, yet happy in his poverty, and the little collection of books placed over his bed, and manifesting his native dignity of feeling in his bearing and conversation:—

“ Short and quick, and full of high sentence ;  
Sounding in moral virtue was his speche.”

The following portrait—made famous by the fresher colours of Dryden, who transferred it to his

<sup>1</sup> “ *Monstrante fontes vate Skeltono sacros.*” A line which it is, indeed, difficult to suppose that Erasmus could have written.



own canvas—breathes the gentleness, the holiness, and the truth of Herbert's "Good Parson": —

" A good man ther was of religioun,  
 That was a poure Personne of a toun ;  
 But riche he was of holy thought and werk,  
 He was also a lerned man, a clerk,  
 That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche.  
 His parishens devoutly wolde he teche,  
 Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,  
 And in adversite ful patient ;  
 And miche he was sprevid<sup>1</sup> offensithes.<sup>2</sup>  
 Ful loth were him to cursen for his tithes,  
 But rather wolde he geven<sup>3</sup> out of doute,  
 Unto his poor parishens aboute,  
 Of his offring, and eke of his substance.  
 He coulde in litel thing have suffisance.  
 Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder,  
 But he ne left nought for no rain, ne thonder,  
 In sickeness and in mischief to visite  
 The ferrest<sup>4</sup> in his parish, moche and lite,  
 Upon his fete, and in his hand a staf.  
 This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf,<sup>5</sup>  
 That first he wrought, and afterward he taught.  
 Out of the gospel he the wordes caught,  
 And this figure he added yet thereto,  
 That if gold rust, what should iron do ?  
 For if a preest be foull, on whom we trust,  
 No wonder is a lewed man to rust.  
 Wel ought a preest ensample for to geve,  
 By his clenesse, how his shepe ought to live.

He sette not his benefice to hire,  
 And lette his shepe acombred<sup>6</sup> in the mire,  
 And ran unto London unto Seint Poules,  
 To seken him a chantirie for soules,

<sup>1</sup> Proved.

<sup>2</sup> Frequently.

<sup>3</sup> Given.

<sup>4</sup> Furthest.

<sup>5</sup> Gave.

<sup>6</sup> Encombered.



Or with a brotherhede to be withhold;  
 But dwelt at home and kepte wel his fold,  
 So that the wolfe ne made it not miscarie.  
 He was a shepherd, and no mercenarie,  
 And though he holy were, and virtuous  
 He was to sinful men not dispitous.<sup>1</sup>  
 Ne of his speche dangerous, ne digne,<sup>2</sup>  
 But in his teaching discrete and benigne.  
 To drawen folk to heven, with faireness,  
 By good ensample was his besinesse:  
 But if were any person obstinat,  
 What so he were of high or low estat,  
 Him wolde he snibben sharply for his nones.  
 A better preest, I trow, that no wher non is.  
 He waited aftir ne no pompe ne reverence,  
 He *maked him no spiced conscience*,<sup>3</sup>  
 But Christe's love, and his apostles twelve,  
 He taught, but first he folwed it himselve."

Even enthusiasm itself would not expect to find such a Pastor in every town. It is easy to conceive that a roving order of friars, combining preaching and mendicancy, may have frequently mingled tyranny with their religion, and have sown confusion instead of peace. A writer, at the close of the 16th century, complained that they compelled

<sup>1</sup> Angry to excess.

<sup>2</sup> Disdainful, or proud.

<sup>3</sup> Tyrwhit, in a former note upon the Canterbury Tales, confessed his inability to explain a *spiced conscience*: but in his glossary he offers a satisfactory interpretation of this singular phrase, which he illustrates from a passage in Beaumont and Fletcher, where the epithet *spiced*, applied to the conscience, appears to signify *scrupulous*, or particularly *tender*. Thus, Ceanthe offering the purse to the priestess, who is unwilling to receive it, reasons with her in this manner—

"Take it; it is yours;

*Be not so spiced*: it is good gold;

And goodness is no gall to the conscience."

the parishes to pay for their discourses, and that an address at a christening, a wedding, or a burial, was only to be purchased at a charge of an angel or a noble.<sup>1</sup> These grievances were naturally resented; and the evil seems gradually to have reached to a magnitude so dangerous as to awaken the interference of the legislature. In a proclamation, issued in the twenty-eighth year of Henry VIII., against erroneous writings and books, "divers sundry and light persons called pardoners" are especially denounced.<sup>2</sup> The dissolution of the monasteries checked the itinerancy of the friars. But if any immediate benefit followed their suppression, it was chiefly negative; if a corrupted doctrine flowed from their lips, in many places no religious word, of any kind, was proclaimed after their departure. Some of the northern churches, according to Gilpin, had not four sermons in sixteen years. Even in the new system, many evils of the old, instead of being erased, appear to have been copied and retained. "The limitor's place, when supplied at all, was filled by some licensed preacher resident in the neighbourhood, who, from party or pious motives, advocated the old or new opinions; and the great learned man, a king's or bishop's chaplain, an arch-deacon, or a dean, took the position of the pardoner."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stubbs' *Anatomy of Abuses*.

<sup>2</sup> Collier, *Hist. Dram. Poetry*, ii. 386.

<sup>3</sup> Haweis' *Sketches of the Reformation*, taken from the *Contemporary Pulpit*, i. 66.

## CHAPTER II.

Early Preachers;—Fisher, a patron of Erasmus; specimen of his eloquence; affecting incident at his execution. — II. Colet, the founder of the New School; his study of Chaucer; Longland, called by Sir Thomas More, “another Colet.” — III. Latimer, his intrepidity and zeal; singular comprehensiveness of his discourses; his style, contrasted with that of Menôt in France; some of its peculiarities traced to the influence of Miracle-plays upon the popular mind. — IV. Cranmer and Jewell. — V. Dering and Sandys; their sermons characterised.—VI. Paul’s Cross; its history and associations.

FISHER, Bishop of Rochester, was the last, as he was assuredly the most learned and eloquent preacher of the Old School. The portrait which Erasmus has left us, is one of rare interest and expression. He records the spotless integrity of his life, his deep and recondite erudition, and what he calls the incredible sweetness of his manner to persons of every capacity and degree. Erasmus followed Fisher, after an interval of about seven years, in the Lady Margaret Professorship at Cambridge, and he would of course remember with feelings of grateful regard the early kindness and support that Fisher had bestowed upon him, in conjunction with Linacre, Colet, and More. There is, however, no reason for supposing his praise to have been un-

fairly tinged by personal esteem. Sir Thomas More proclaimed Fisher to be one of the most illustrious persons of his age. Splendid in his munificent encouragement of learning, every stone of St. John's and Christ's Colleges recalls his name to the beholder. The love of knowledge, which he fanned in others, glowed in his own breast. Long after the season of active exertion had gone by, he applied his mind, with industrious zeal, to the study of Greek, and even requested Erasmus to obtain for him the instruction of Latymer in that language. His death exhibits him to the eye in the attitude of melancholy grandeur, which always distinguishes a sacrifice to principle. Honours had no power to dazzle his clear and earnest spirit. When the Pope's intention of making him a cardinal was communicated to him, he replied, "If the red eap were lying at my feet, I would not stoop to pick it up." Like his friend More, he seems to have been a person of infinite sprightliness and gaiety of spirit, furnishing another illustration of the joyous and sunshiny temperament of our olden scholars and divines.

A Romanist, and encircled by obscuring mists of superstition, he had, nevertheless, from the heights of contemplation to which his inquiring spirit was accustomed to climb, caught many bright glimpses of gospel purity and truth. Haweis remarks, that he was acquainted with every doctrine which the Reformers recovered from neglect; certainly with Luther's criterion; "and as far as it

was justly so described, believed it, and reposed upon it." One most important omission, however, is pointed out in the practical theology of Fisher ; and that is, the absence of any frequent and direct reference to the atonement of Jesus Christ as the source of human salvation. Haweis admits that the goodness and forbearance of the Saviour are sufficiently recognised and set forth ; but the manner in which the mediatorial sacrifice is made to bear upon the sins of mankind he considers to be insufficiently, if at all, indicated. Fisher certainly dwells with great frequency and affection upon the subordinate doctrines of his church ; yet, if his writings be carefully examined, it will be found that the sanctity and omnipotence of the Cross are acknowledged and revered. The following passage occurs in his sermon on Henry VII.:<sup>1</sup>—  
"Our Saviour Jesus is *justus*, for he is innocent and guiltless ; and therefore he is a convenient means, a sufficient advocate for us, before the face of his Father ; according to the words of St. John,—*If any of us have sinned, let us not despair, for we have an advocate for us before God*, our Saviour, which is just and without sin ; and he shall be a mean for our sin ; not for ours only, but for all the world." We might perhaps be allowed to explain the comparative silence of many of our elder preachers respecting the doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ, as Paley has accounted for

<sup>1</sup> Wynkin de Worde, 1509.

the unfrequent reference to our Lord's miracles by the early Christian writers, by affirming that the doctrine, being all along supposed, they proceeded to build upon it. How ardently and faithfully the doctrine itself was taken into the heart of Fisher, is strikingly shown by some of the last words he uttered. If he did not constantly uplift the Cross in his sermons, he raised it with a dying grasp in his example. When he was carried to execution, he held a New Testament in his hand, and as his eye fell upon the book, he prayed that he might open it at a passage suitable to his condition. His finger rested upon the 17th Chapter of St. John, where our Lord, lifting up his eyes to heaven, refers to the gift of eternal life which he had bestowed upon as many as had been given to him : *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth : I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."* Having read these solemn words, the bishop closed the book, with the remark, "Here is learning enough for me to my life's end."

The eloquence of Fisher produced a strong and enduring impression. His discourses were in the highest degree practical, as exhorting his hearers from sin, and inviting them to the cultivation of all the qualities that enrich and beautify the character. In few writers of the 16th or succeeding century will the reader find more animated or stirring appeals to the conscience. Like his most



eminent contemporaries and successors, he addresses the hearts of his congregation through their imagination and their eyes. For example ;—he represents a man suspended by a slender cord, held by one of his deadliest enemies, over a deep pit, in which glare fierce beasts, eagerly awaiting his descent. This case he applies to himself ; and supposing such a pit to yawn beneath his own feet, he asks his hearers whether they would not deem him to be in a position of imminent peril. Then he draws the moral. The man is the *sinner* ; the pit is *hell* ; the wild beasts are the *devils* ; the slender cord by which he hangs over it, is the perishable thread of life. His words are full of energy :—“Heaven is above us, wherein Almighty God is resplendent and abiding, which giveth himself to us as our Father, if we obey and do according to his holy commandments ; the deepness of hell is under us ; our sins and wickedness be afore us ; behind us be the times and spaces that were offered to do satisfaction and penance, which we have negligently lost ; on our right hand be all the benefits of our most good and meek Lord, Almighty God given unto us ; and on our left hand, the unmeasurable misfortunes that might have happened if that Almighty God had not defended us by his goodness and meekness. Within us, is the abomination of our sins, whereby the image of Almighty God in us is very foul and deformed, and by that we be made unto him very enemies. By all these things before rehearsed, we have provoked the dreadful

majesty of him unto so great wrath, that we must needs fear lest that he let fall this line of life from his hand, and the parts of our body be broken, and we then fall down into the deep dungeon of hell.”<sup>1</sup>

As Fisher was the last of the old school of preachers, Colet has been called the first of the new. His elevation to the deanery of St. Paul's in 1505 effected a beneficial change, not only in the theory, but the practice of the pulpit. The educational apparatus of the cathedral with regard to spiritual things was wretchedly disorganized. The precentor was a foreigner, and therefore ill calculated to instruct an English congregation; the chancellor and treasurer were lawyers; “bosom-sermons” were generally delivered; and the style of the bishop, Fitzjames, was so tedious and uninteresting, that Colet's censure of apathy in addresses from the Pulpit was resented by him as a personal affront.<sup>2</sup> Colet instituted and provided a sermon upon every Sunday, either at the Cross, or in the chapel under the choir. He seems to have introduced the custom of examining some important topic of Christian doctrine, in a series of successive discourses, forming a connected chain of exposition and application. For this purpose, he would select the Gospel for the day, the Creed, the Commandments, or one of the Apostolical letters. His preaching was singularly

<sup>1</sup> Treatise concerning the Fruitful Sayings of David; in seven sermons, made and compiled by John Fisher. Sign: ii. ij; quoted by Haweis, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> See Haweis' Sketches, p. 12.



impressive. Sir Thomas More, in a very beautiful letter urging him to return to his pulpit at St. Paul's, speaks of having been often aroused by his most admirable sermons, and unspeakably delighted by the expression of his countenance and the significance of his action. Erasmus says that every feature spoke. Colet is supposed not to have written his discourses. He composed with difficulty, and without elegance. He is said to have despised the rigid accuracy of grammatical rules ; and, though a learned man, and a noble promoter of learning in others, he always discouraged that bloodless erudition which is acquired by the undigested perusal of a multitude of books. He thought that such preachers impaired their mental constitutions, and the healthy vigour of their thoughts, for the sake of "a learned sort of madness." If he was indifferent to the strict accuracy, he bestowed diligent care upon the cultivation of his style. Erasmus mentions his study of Chaucer, from whose writings he sought to infuse into his own the rich and vigorous idioms of nature and truth. More includes Colet among the most learned and holy persons who had adorned that age.<sup>1</sup>

The name of Longland may be joined with Colet, as being, like him, remarkable for the erudition and energy of his preaching. We have, indeed, the authority of Sir Thomas More for the association.

<sup>1</sup> "Coletum nomino, quo uno viro, neque doctior neque sanctior apud nos, aliquot retro seculis quisquam fuit."—*Vide Jortin ; Life of Erasmus*, Appendix, ii. 659.

He sums up all his praises in calling him "another Colet."<sup>1</sup> He resembled him in the purity of his manners not less than in the activity of his mind. He was confessor to Henry VIII., and the king's divorce from Catherine has been ascribed to his suggestion. It is difficult to reconcile his earnest exhortation to study the Scriptures for the merciful and gentle disposition which they everywhere inculcate, with the violent invectives and censures of Fox. In the discourse on laying the first stone of Christ Church at Oxford, he alludes to the obstacles opposed by worldly men to the proclamation and diffusion of the universal charity enjoined by Jesus Christ. In these revelations of his character, we do not recognise the stern lineaments of the persecutor displayed in the Martyrology. The sermons of Longland were preached in English, but are now to be judged only by the Latin versions which have been preserved. Mr. Haweis has translated an interesting specimen. He also gives in the Appendix a short passage from a sermon preached in 1534.

But the preacher who, above all his contemporaries, appears to have influenced and moulded his age, was the martyr Latimer, Bishop of Worcester. His sermons were published in 1548. Hallam praises their honest zeal and lively delineation of

<sup>1</sup> These are the words of More :—" Dominus Johannes Longland, Decanus Salisberiensis, *alter*, ut ejus laudes uno verbo complectar, *Coletus*, seu concionantem audias, seu vitæ spectes puritatem."

character, regarding them as the best specimens of a style not yet lost in Italy, coming home to the bosoms and feelings of the multitude, "animated, effective, picturesque, intelligible, but too unsparing both of ludicrous association and common-place invective."<sup>1</sup> His intrepidity of utterance rendered him a formidable censor of manners, and even elevated him into the dignity of an avenger of the wronged, and an upholder of the weak. The lethargy of the church and the corruption of the law were alike lashed by his indignant eloquence. In his fourth sermon before Edward VI., he expressed a wish that Satan would give to a man the same view of the terrors of hell which he once gave to Christ of the glories of the earth. On one side, he would see nothing but unpreaching prelates: "He might look as far as Calais, I warrant you." The judges are handled with equal severity: "And then, if we would go on the other side, and show where the bribing judges are, I think we should see so many, that there were scarce room for any other." This hardihood of reproof was one of the perilous virtues of Latimer. Cranmer, when he obtained his appointment to a court-preachership, admonished him to give his reproofs a general, not a particular application. He seems to have frequently reached the terrified conscience of the powerful or opulent sinner, and to have forced a recompence for property plundered, or injuries in-

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to Literature, i. 518.

flicted. Latimer stands out from his contemporaries, a distinct character. He incidentally refers to this peculiarity : "When I was in trouble, it was objected unto me, that I was singular, that no man thought as I thought; that I loved singularity in all that I did."<sup>1</sup> The remark was true, though not in the sense in which it was uttered. He was singular, indeed, in his courage and candour. I remember no writings of that age at once so fearless and forcible, except some of the Adages of Erasmus.

Every thoughtful reader of our old sermons must have been often struck by the singular topics that are continually introduced, not only without any immediate relation to the text, but sometimes in direct contrast with it. The pages of Latimer supply copious illustrations. How startling is such a passage as the following, suddenly encountered:—"I hear say Master Malanethon, that great clerk, should come hither; I would wish him, and such as he is, two hundred pounds a year. The king would never want it in his coffers at the year's end. There is yet among us two great learned men, Petrus Martyr and Bernard Ochin, which have an hundred marks a-piece. I would the king would bestow a thousand pounds on that sort."<sup>2</sup> This was certainly one of the singularities of the preacher. In the time of Elizabeth, some delicate suggestion in a Court Masque, or under the second Charles, a flattering couplet in a panegyric, would have been the mode

<sup>1</sup> Sermon preached before Edward VI., March 22nd, 1549.

<sup>2</sup> Third sermon before the king.

adopted to recommend a deserving scholar to the patronage of royalty. In the reign of Anne, a word from Swift or Pope opened the national purse in the hand of Oxford; while in modern days, the pen of the minister—if impelled by a continued impulse from without—inserts a fortunate name in the pension-list. But the Pulpit was the Press of the Reformation.

Latimer has incurred some ridicule through the forgetfulness of his critics, that many of his sermons were composed with a reference to the capacity and feelings of the child-king, before whom they were preached. Edward was only in his ninth year. Cranmer cautioned his friend not “to stand longer in the pulpit than an hour and a half at most.” The present appearance of his discourses would suggest that he kept within the limit of the injunction. He possessed, however, in a very unusual measure, the art of awaking and detaining the attention of his hearers. His manner must have been, in the strictest sincerity of the term, natural. His emotion possessed the charm required by Longinus of impressing the spectator with its unpremeditated truth.<sup>1</sup>

Much that now offends the critical eye in his style and imagery, was in accordance, not only with the temper, but with the amusements and habits of the times. In France, a similar fashion of pulpit rhetoric prevailed, presenting all the eccentric rude-

<sup>1</sup> De Sublim. cap. 18.

ness, without the forcible sense, and the unaffected yet ennobling piety of Latimer. Menôt and Mailard are apt illustrations; the former dying in 1518, the latter in 1502. They were accordingly contemporaries of the English bishop. Menôt, the most celebrated preacher of France in the beginning of the 16th century, belonged to the order of Franciscans, and for some time taught theology in the establishment of the Cordeliers at Paris. His life embraced many picturesque pages of French history during the reigns of Louis XI., Charles VIII., Louis XII., and Francis I. His sermons were printed in 1519, thus preceding the publication of Latimer by twenty-nine years. His popularity is shown in the title bestowed upon him—*langue d'or*. Yet this Chrysostom of the middle ages presented no feature of resemblance to his forerunner in Antioch. It would, indeed, be impossible to comprehend his style, without considering the condition of the national mind in which it was formed. The Scripture-play had not lost its charm. The company of actors, known as the Confrairie de la Passion de N. S., which had been established in Paris at the close of the 14th century, continued to perform religious dramas until the suppression of their theatre in 1547. These appear to have surpassed our English Mysteries in pomp of scenical display. The theatrical machinery was of the most extraordinary description. In one of the Parisian Mysteries, St. Barbara, after being suspended by the heels upon the stage, “is



torn with pincers and scorched with lamps" in the presence of the audience.<sup>1</sup> The decorations were in a similar vein of grotesque conception.<sup>2</sup> Heaven and hell were represented by a scaffolding at the back of the stage, one towering above the other ; while between the two appeared the world, with a particular development of the region where the scene of the story was laid. In Germany, invention assumed a wilder aspect. Bouterweck mentions an enormous dragon, with eyes of polished steel, ascending with awful savageness out of the darkness of an emblematical pit. This spectacle was exhibited at Metz in 1437. In such an atmosphere the intellect of the preacher grew up. He imbibed the spirit and adopted the phraseology of these Miracle-plays. The interpretation of the parable of the Prodigal Son<sup>3</sup> displays with remarkable vividness the manner of Menôt. He represents him going to his father, and reminding him that he had arrived at a period of life which authorized him to manage his own affairs. His mother being dead,<sup>4</sup> he demands an assignment of that portion of property to which he is entitled. Having obtained it, he is in some difficulty as to the easiest way of converting it into money : he accordingly exchanges it for silver, which he carefully folds up in a bag. His humble costume next attracts his attention, and

<sup>1</sup> Hallam, i. 298.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 299.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Enfant prodigue.*

<sup>4</sup> *Mater mea defuncta est, reliquit nobis bona ; facite mi partem meam.*

he sends for drapers and silk merchants, under whose hands he rapidly presents a very different appearance. His apparel is entirely new, and of the richest materials.<sup>1</sup> This may be considered a sufficient specimen of French exposition in 1500. The history of our art, if not of our pulpit, affords a parallel to it. A MS. in the British Museum portrays the Lord himself in the fashionable dress of the 15th century.

There is no reason to suppose that the mental cultivation of England had attained to greater maturity than that of France. In both countries, the Miracle-play was the amusement of the people; and some of the Chester-mysteries rivalled the coarsest buffooneries of Paris or Metz. Yet the natural vigour and muscular imagination of Latimer enabled him to throw off much of this injurious influence. The printing-press had not long begun its work of civilization when Menôt appeared in Paris. Its earliest indications of life were given in 1470. The Gothic letters in which his sermons are printed show him to have been among the first participators in its advantages. He closed his eyes before the labours of Budæus had

<sup>1</sup> This is the preacher's description :—" *Se fait accoutrer de pied en cap.*" Not less animated is the sketch of the costume :—" *Quando vidit sibi pulchras caligas d'écarlate, bien tirées, la belle chemise froncée sur le collet, le pourpoint fringant de velours, la tocque de Florence, à cheveux peignés, et qu'il de se sentit le damas voler sur le dos; hæc secum dicit, Oportetne mihi aliquid ?*"



diffused any acquaintance with Greek literature in that city.

In the sermons of Latimer we discover a racier vigour and an idiomatic truth. They have been thought to contest with the Utopia of More the honour of being the prose-classic of the day. Two points of similarity may be noticed between the English and French preachers. In the earlier Miracle-plays, the story was usually told by *action*; gesture supplied the place of language, and the audience *saw* rather than *heard*. Being for the most part composed in Latin, the common people had no other means of gaining a knowledge of the fable. It will accordingly be perceived, that Latimer and Menôt endeavour to *represent*, as much as possible, the doctrines or histories they described; to put them into action, and to tell the story by the expressive movement of images. This remark may be useful in explaining some of the daring figures which Latimer employs. The other coincidence of manner lies in the freedom of attack upon the vices and corruptions of the higher orders. Latimer did not fear, at Paul's Cross, to denounce the grasping avarice and shameless dishonesty of the legal tribunals; and Menôt, by an apt, if a humble metaphor, compared the French judges to a cat, placed to protect a cheese, one grasp of whose teeth commits more ravages upon the treasure than the prolonged assault of a whole company of mice.

In the Miracle-plays, the difficult medium of a foreign language was changed by slow degrees into

the more familiar phrases of the vernacular tongue. Some traces of this transition-state are recognised in the sermons of Latimer, and especially in Menôt, who appears to have been incapable of climbing to that loftiness of thought and occasional stateliness of expression which distinguished his contemporary at the court of Edward VI. Some of Latimer's intermixtures of Latin and English are, however, sufficiently curious, as in the following anecdote, introduced into his fifth sermon upon the Lord's Prayer: "There was once a fellow asked a philosopher a question, saying, *Quomodo saginatur equus?*—How is a horse made fat? The philosopher made answer, saying, *Oculo domini*—With his master's eye." The Abbé de la Rue has recorded an equally singular method of winning the attention of a congregation in the 13th century. Our own pulpit furnishes an example. In one of the Latin sermons of Stephen Langton, who was Archbishop of Canterbury in 1228, some French verses are inserted to apply an allegory to the Virgin Mary.

Coleridge notices the difficulty of marking the transition of the language from Chaucer, through the writers of the 15th century; but he discovers in Latimer and his brethren, under Edward VI., the general characteristics of the earliest manner; every division popular, the sentences short, the manner impassioned; but the whole subject fused and blended into cohesion and strength by the fire of the preacher's imagination and faith. Another

peculiarity in our elder divines may be remarked, in their habit of producing their argument or exhortation, as Lydgate told his poetical tales, by *a long processe*. In so doing, they conformed to the temper, and conciliated the taste of their hearers. Gray has ingeniously observed, that they loved a length and train of circumstances in a narration. "The vulgar do so still; it gives an air of reality to facts; it fixes the attention, raises and keeps in suspense their expectation, and supplies the defects of their little and lifeless imagination; and it keeps pace with the slow motion of their thoughts."<sup>1</sup> This criticism is applied to our poetry, but it is not less illustrative of theology at the same period. You feel its truth in the perusal of Latimer. Perhaps a similar charm may have recommended the sermons of the venerable Coverdale, who died thirteen years after Latimer, equally beloved in the Cathedral of Exeter, and the parochial cure of St. Magnus. In London, and when bowed to the grave beneath the snows of eighty years, he attracted multitudes to every church in which he appeared; "crowds called at his house on week-days, anxious to know where he would preach on the following Sunday."

Cranmer fills a larger space in the historical eye than Latimer, but from a different cause. He wanted the stirring eloquence of his friend. He is reported to have sought from Ridley the nerve in

<sup>1</sup> Some Remarks on the Poems of Lydgate. Works of Gray, by Mitford, v. 298.

which his own style was deficient. The observation comes from Burnet, and would explain, if true, the energetic and happy simplicity that mark his contributions to the Homilies. But Ridley disclaimed the honour.<sup>1</sup> The complete works of Cranmer have been given to the student with all the diligent accuracy of the Oxford press. The Homilies of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works are there assigned to his pen upon satisfactory evidence. A sermon, supposed to have been preached at court, in reference to the rebellion in Norfolk, is the only similar production of Cranmer now extant. His manner is not attractive, but it displays the scholar, — thoughtful, patient, and comprehensive. His love of books forms one of the most pleasing features in his character. His library was rich in ecclesiastical literature. There the venerable head of Latimer stooped over the huge folios; and he is recorded to have mentioned a rare book he met with, in a sermon before the king.<sup>2</sup> If the style of Cranmer be homely and inelegant, it is hearty and sincere. It partakes of the earnest simplicity of the age. Hortatory theology at the Reformation may have been woven of a very coarse material,<sup>3</sup> but its adversaries found strength and flexibility in the texture. Tried by rude and violent hands, it seldom unravelled, or exhibited a rent.

Jewell, who died sixteen years after the martyr-

<sup>1</sup> Life of Cranmer, by Le Bas, ii. 315.

<sup>2</sup> Strype, Memorials of Cranmer, ii. 631.

<sup>3</sup> Blunt, Sketch of the Reformation.

dom of Cranmer, gave early indications of genius. His tutor exclaimed, in the fulness of his admiration and love, that "Paul's Cross would ring of that boy." The prophecy was fulfilled — Paul's Cross did ring of him. It is not known whether his sermons were written before their delivery; they were certainly prepared and studied with great diligence. His famous discourse at the Cross, in 1560, is said to be given "as near as the author could call it to remembrance." Humphrey mentions his practice of taking notes into the pulpit. The sermons of Jewell possess a national and personal interest. Haweis speaks of them with warm applause, as the reflections "of a deeply and truly affectionate soul, expanding itself over all that came within its influence." He finds in them a grace of style, a beauty of illustration, and an ampleness of learning, sought in vain among his contemporaries, frequently combining "the fancy of a poet with the wisdom of a sage, the lore of a scholar with the simplicity of a child." The extent of his erudition must of course be measured by the age he lived in. Hallam<sup>1</sup> notices, as a remarkable characteristic of the *Apology*, that the quotations from the Greek fathers are made in Latin, and that Greek is sprinkled over the volume with a very sparing hand.

A modern writer complains, that whatever Jewell touched turns to controversy, and compares his

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to Literature, ii. 62, (note.)

works to nouns defective in all cases except the *accusative*. He deprecates the suspicion of any rhetorical exaggeration in this criticism. "Nothing is more remarkable in the theology of the reforming age (to speak generally) than the deficiency of all writings of a doctrinal or even of a practical cast." The ingenious equivocation of the parenthesis will not protect the assertion. Every condition of the popular mind has, and must have, its distinctive expression. In a time of war, the most industrious husbandman thinks more of barring his gate, than of training the rose that clusters over it. The Reformation was a period of warfare, and the champions of the conflicting parties were compelled to be ever on the watch for a challenge or a surprise. If the Prayer-book lay under their pillow, the spear was fixed at the door of the tent.

Instead of censuring the absence of devotional and practical teaching in the writings of the Reformation, we are rather called to mark how closely and perpetually they are interwoven with the bitterness of controversy and the exposure of superstition. If the sermons of Latimer were to be characterised by a single epithet, it would be *practical*. By which it is intended to assert their perfect adaptation to the temper and wants of the age to which they were addressed; the practical nature of a sermon being always relative to time, people, and disposition. A similar explanation may be given of the peculiarities of Jewell. Latimer was practical with a particular reference to *conduct*;



Jewell, to *belief*. One spoke chiefly of the *actions* that pure *doctrines* inspire ; and the other, of the *doctrines* that inspire the *actions*. And surely, at a season when the tempestuous weather of controversy had shaken down so much of the old architecture of faith—when so many gates of religious imagery, long called Beautiful, had been overthrown—we might be expected to sympathize with the anxious desire of men like Jewell to familiarize their hearers and readers with the causes of this devastation of a spiritual structure, consecrated to their hearts and memories by so many solemn and endearing associations. The aged believer would still linger with a watery eye upon the ruins of that faith in which he had lived and grown old, and in which his kindred had fallen asleep :—

“ Expleri nequit, atque oculos per singula volvit,  
Miraturque ” ——

Dering resembled Jewell in sweetness of expression and power over the affections. Descended from a family of antiquity in Kent, he spent some years at Cambridge, cultivating his talents and gathering stores of useful learning. When called to the distinguished office of preacher at St. Paul’s, the piety of his life lent a force of persuasion to his sermons. He was the popular lecturer of the city. Parker thought meanly of him ; while Dering revenged himself upon Parker, by prophesying that he would be the last Archbishop of Canterbury. His puritanism was coarse and bigoted, without re-

ceiving any softening light from a vein of humour in which he occasionally indulged. Soames<sup>1</sup> quotes an example from Fuller ; preaching before Elizabeth, he told her, that during the persecution under Mary, her motto was *Tanquam ovis*, "as a sheep;" but that then it ought to be *Tanquam indomita juvenca*, "as an untamed heifer." Dering could address the queen in a very different strain—a strain of censure and admonition unparalleled in the eloquence of that reign. An illustration may be taken from a sermon preached before Elizabeth, Feb. 25, 1569, and published in 1584:<sup>2</sup>—

"If I would declare unto your majesty all the great abuses that are in your Ministry, I should lead you along in the spirit, as God did the prophet Ezekiel, and after many intolerable evils, yet I shall still say unto you, 'Behold, you shall see more abominations than these.' I would first lead you to your benefices, and behold, some are defiled with Impropriations, some with Sequestrations, some loaden with pensions, some robbed of their commodities; and yet, behold, more abominations than these. Look, after this, upon your patrons, and lo, some are selling their benefices, some farming them, some keep them for their children, some give them to boys, some to serving-men, and very few seek after learned pastors; and yet you shall see more abominations than these. Look upon

<sup>1</sup> Elizabethan Religious History, 191.

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted by Sir Egerton Brydges, in "British Bibliographer," i. 260.



your ministry; and there are some of one occupation, some of another; some shake bucklers, some ruffians, some hawkers and hunters; some dicers and carders; some blind guides, and cannot see; some dumb dogs, and will not bark; and yet a thousand more iniquities have now covered the priesthood. And yet you, in the meanwhile,—you, at whose hands God will require it, sit still, and are careless, and let men do as they list. It toucheth not belike your commonwealth, and therefore you are well contented to let all alone. The Lord increase the gifts of his Holy Spirit in you, that from faith to faith you may grow continually. If you know not how to reform this, or have so little council (a man's heart is blinded) that you can devise no way, ask council at the mouth of the Lord, and his holy will shall be revealed unto you. To reform evil patrons, your majesty must strengthen your laws, that they may rule high as low."

Dering died in 1576, and certainly deserves to be recorded among the embellishers of our theological prose: his style is clear, and often elegant; his occasional archaisms give it a solemn and soothing colour; his imagery is usually simple, obvious, and appropriate; and he possesses the uncommon merit of accurately distinguishing the links of the metaphor, and at the same time of connecting them harmoniously together, as in the following instance: "Even as our hands and arms and other members are not nourished but only by the meat received of the head, so our spiritual meat of

righteousness and life is not given us but from our head, Jesus Christ. And, as the veins are means by which nourishment is conveyed to every part, so faith is the means by which we receive from Christ all that is healthful unto us. And as by joints and sinews our members are really knit, and made a body unto the head, so really, truly, and, indeed, by one spirit we are knit unto Christ; as perfectly and substantially made one by him, as our members are one with our head.”<sup>1</sup> Such was Dering.

Sandys, Archbishop of York, is better known. Born in 1519, and dying in 1588, he connects the religious history of Edward and Elizabeth. Colet he could only have known by tradition; “but he might have heard and remembered Fisher and Longland.” He was thirty-six years old when Latimer perished at the stake; while with the eloquence and zeal of Jewell—summoned to his rest before he had completed his fiftieth year—he was doubtless familiar. He lived to behold the meridian splendour of Hooker, and perhaps, it has been suggested, to see the dawning reputation of Andrewes.

*he spent  
years in  
celebrating  
jewel!*

But the manner of Sandys was influenced neither by what he heard or read. No echo of Latimer or of Jewell strikes the ear. Hallam passes him with a slight recognition :—“ Sandys’ sermons may, perhaps, be called good, but certainly not very dis-

<sup>1</sup> Tenth Reading upon Heb. ii. Works, p. 153; quoted by Haweis, p. 24.

tinguished.”<sup>1</sup> This is justly said of their intellectual quality; but it would be extremely erroneous, if intended to characterise their composition. Nichols communicated to the poet Gray the astonishment he felt at understanding the French of the 14th, so much better than the English of the 16th century. In truth, however, a large portion of our prose in that century, and especially in the last thirty or forty years of it, is fluent, clear, and easy of comprehension. The sermons of Sandys illustrate and confirm the assertion. Printed in 1585, and therefore preceding the Polity of Hooker by the space of nearly nine years, they display a natural grace, of which it would be difficult to select any previous specimens. Unlike Hooker, who had formed his style upon the classic models which Boccacio introduced into Italy, Sandys anticipated some of the harmony and ease of our simplest English. He excels all his contemporaries in the transparency of his diction. His stream of thought may not be broad or deep, but the eye can always look down into the channel, and ascertain the quality and value of the deposit. Marmontel’s eulogy of Massillon may be transferred to Sandys. Few sentences require a second perusal. His periods rarely wind into what have been called the semicolon paragraphs of Taylor; and never jingle with those chimes of metre which Atterbury so earnestly admonished his son to avoid. Merits like these must always be

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to Literature, ii. 119.

accompanied by corresponding defects. The tranquillity of the stream shows that the current is not strong. The reader misses the fervour, the animation, and the glow that impart so attractive a hue to the eloquence of Taylor, of Hall, or of Andrewes. The duty of the Christian is not told with the tongue of a poet, and heavenly messages of hope are never written with sunbeams. His sermons, however, teach all that he intended, and in the manner he preferred. They abound in practical admonitions; their interpretation of holy truth is plain; and their polemical tone, though often sharp, is unimbittered by the venom of his antagonists.

In judging of the opinions maintained by Sandys and his contemporaries upon the great doctrines of our faith, we should be cautious to distinguish the *doctrine* from its *expression*. A remark of Keble upon Hooker may be advantageously remembered by every student of our sacred literature, from the Reformation to James I. Hooker, finding the language which has since become characteristic of the Calvinistic school, commonly employed by those theologians to whose guidance his education taught him to look, adopts it upon occasions when no tenet of Calvinism is questioned. This key would open many obscurities in the sermons of the 16th and 17th centuries.

With any reference to our earlier sermons, it is natural and interesting to associate the place where they were delivered. This was Paul's Cross;—"once probably a beautiful and lofty structure,

having been used for preaching in 1299. Within a hundred years of this date, it was in a ruinous condition, but was repaired about 1425. Its appearance, however, in the incorrect delineations which remain of it, most of them designed in the 17th century, seems to indicate that the ancient foundation and external traits of the first story were adapted to a pulpit, in which was a projection for the preacher on one side of the hexagon, and room for ten or a dozen persons in the chamber behind him. It was not then surrounded by a wall, but a roof of ogee, or, according to other drafts, of simply slanting form, covered with lead, and surmounted by a Cross, sufficed for the preservation and utility of the monument, but did not enhance its beauty.”<sup>1</sup> Until within a few years, an elm marked the spot in St. Paul’s Churchyard where the Cross once stood. “This tree has disappeared, like the structure it commemorated, and strong iron railings prevent their approach whose pilgrim steps would occupy the place where many a noble preacher made the old cathedral walls echo his glowing sentences.”<sup>2</sup>

Various indeed were the scenes of which Paul’s Cross was the witness in the days of its glory. At one time, the pavement beneath resounded to the feet of a multitude eager to catch every accent of Hooper, as he ascended the pulpit, with his scarlet chymere flowing to his feet, and the terrible square

<sup>1</sup> Sketches of the Reformation taken from the Contemporary Pulpit, p. 305, (Appendix.)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 29.

cap upon his head; or a penitent was going through his punishment, arrayed in a white sheet, with a taper in his hand, and standing upon a flat form erected on the outside of the pulpit. Meanwhile, the double balcony, at the angle of the church, was thronged by the nobility; the civic authorities shone in the robes of office; and distant groups of gentry, seated upon their horses, caught up a few scattered sentences, as they loitered along the outskirts of the assembly. Here Jewell uttered his famous challenge to Rome; here the Spanish king came to hear Gardiner, attended by a magnificent retinue of courtiers, and encircled by a guard of horsemen, four hundred in number. Here, too, the dead were carried to their last earthly home. The churchyard of St. Paul's was the chief burial-ground of the metropolis, and the open graves furnished the preacher with the liveliest illustration of human vanity and decay. Here, too, were enacted some of the saddest scenes in the lives of eminent men. It was at Paul's Cross, amid the wondering gaze of twenty thousand persons, that the pious, the learned, and the persecuted Pecoek read, at the feet of the archbishop, his abjuration of his "heretical opinions," after giving with his own hand fourteen of his books to the executioner appointed to commit them to the flames.

Such was Paul's Cross; the resort of the devout, the curious, the learned, the idle, and the profane. The preacher was exposed to every variety of interruption and insult from the political and religious



prejudices of the crowd. The news of the defeat of the rebels in Norfolk being promulgated while Bonner was preaching at the Cross, he was stopped by the tumultuous shouting of the populace. At another time, when he ventured in the same place to attack the measures and conduct of Edward VI., the congregation gave visible signs of displeasure. Murmurs arose; caps were hurled into the air; stones, and even a dagger, were flung at him, and he himself escaped with difficulty into St. Paul's School, where he remained until the crowd had dispersed.<sup>1</sup> This was in 1553, after the accession of Mary.

The preacher was likewise obliged to endure the audible manifestation of the pleasure or disappointment of his audience. Primitive authority might have been pleaded in behalf of this custom. In early times, the admiration of the theatre was transferred to the church. St. Jerome reproaches Vigilantius for having hailed his doctrine of the resurrection with applause. Chrysostom was frequently welcomed with the cry—"Let us hear the thirteenth Apostle!" and his many and earnest attempts to restrain the exclamations of his admirers proved ineffectual. He seems, however, not to have contemplated any suppression of applause beyond the close of the discourse. That the practice of intimating approbation prevailed in the 17th century, we have a lively evidence in one of the sermons of

<sup>1</sup> Soames, *History of the Reformation*, iv. 43.

Donne, who, it will be remembered, was presented to the deanery of St. Paul's by James I. "And truly, we come too near re-inducing this vain-glorious fashion, in those often periodical murmurings and noises which you make, when the preacher concludeth any point; for those impertinent interjections swallow up one quarter of his hour."<sup>1</sup>

Displeasure was manifested with equal freedom. Sometimes the congregation attempted to drown the voice of the preacher with discordant noises. This insult was offered to men of the highest rank and influence, when they urged a duty that pressed upon the pockets or interests of their hearers. Even Latimer did not escape it. He alludes to the efforts to *cough him down*, while vehemently enforcing the necessity of restitution. Another mode of annoyance had more of a literary character. The dissatisfied hearer wrote upon a slip of paper his objections to the sermon or his opinions upon it, and threw it "into the small chamber where the preacher stood;"<sup>2</sup> or, if impelled by hostility more than usually bitter, he posted it against the Cross. This of course was the more mortifying measure of the two. The paper missile, thrown into the pulpit, was merely a letter of censure transmitted by the post; but once fixed at the Cross, it became the same letter published in the newspaper.

The sermon at the "Cross" was the religious

<sup>1</sup> Serm. cxxi.—2 Cor. v. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Haweis, 38.



attraction of the curious in the sixteenth century; and much anxiety was evinced even by persons of rank to obtain the services of a preacher whom they admired. Becon, the friend and chaplain of Cranmer, affords an instance. He preached at the Cross in 1566, and such was his reputation, to borrow the words of Strype,<sup>1</sup> that the Lord Mayor for that year sent a message to Archbishop Parker, begging "that his Grace would prevail with him to preach one of the sermons at the Spittle that Easter."

The supply of the metropolitan pulpit, so important as an organ to influence the popular mind, seems to have occasioned much anxiety both to the bishops and the government. We have already seen that Colet, upon his promotion to the deanery of St. Paul's, established a sermon at the Cross upon every Sunday, or, when the weather happened to be tempestuous, in the chapel under the choir. But Cranmer and Parker appear to have exercised some jurisdiction over the appointments. The practice of Parker is described by Haweis. Having obtained from the secretary a list of preachers likely to be agreeable to the Queen, the primate revised it, and omitting any name objectionable for incompetence or doctrinal extravagance, he wrote to the persons chosen, communicating their selection. A sudden order, however, from the council, frequently overthrew all these arrangements. Private influence sometimes interfered. Sampson and Humphrey

<sup>1</sup> Memorials of Cranmer, ii. 609.

summoned from Oxford to answer at Lambeth for their nonconformity, obtained, through the favourite Leicester, permission to preach at Paul's Cross, not only without the approval of the archbishop, but contrary to his inclination. This happened in 1564.

## CHAPTER III.

- I. The Reformation ; its difficulties, oppressions, and blessings.  
—II. Latimer's personal illustration of the low state of religious feeling.—III. Imperfect pastoral visitation ; Bernard Gilpin.—IV. The Elizabethan Age ; Parker and Whitgift.—V. The effect of the Queen's theatrical taste upon the Pulpit, exemplified from Sermons of Andrewes and Smyth.—VI. Hooker ; his character.—VII. Elizabethan theology vindicated from the censure of Hallam.

NO swift transition of political or religious feeling has ever been effected without pain. The Reformation was accompanied by disorders and sufferings. We, who breathe the serener air of a settled faith, must go back to the history of those times to witness the ravages of the hurricane by which the atmosphere was cleared. Some injury is inseparable from the work of renovation. Superstition clung so closely to the fabric of truth, that it was impossible to rend it away, without sometimes defacing the architecture. Intemperate zeal frequently aggravated these unavoidable mutilations. The unqualified eulogy of Bishop Pearson<sup>1</sup> is faintly supported by

<sup>1</sup> *Nullo tamen impetu temeritatis adacta, nulla novitatis libidine percita. Oratio vi. (Miscellaneous Works, by Churton) i. 436.*

the voice of history. The overthrow of the monastic institutions was distinguished by a reckless hostility of haste; plunder lighted avarice to the spoil. Even the intercession of the Visitors was ineffectual to protect the educational nunnery of Godstow, and Latimer pleaded in vain for the priory of Malvern.<sup>1</sup> We have a forcible illustration of this desecrating enthusiasm, in the proposal of the Duke of Somerset to demolish Westminster Abbey; as if the erection of his palace in the Strand, out of the ruins of churches, had only sharpened his appetite of sacrilege. The removal of cathedral decorations was the closing of one book of instruction before another was ready. Painted windows were scripture lessons. Even the rigid simplicity of Calvin permitted their introduction in certain states of national ignorance. The re-distribution of the large monastic revenues, however necessary, could only be accomplished by stern and unrelenting violence, which, reacting upon the church, "encouraged habits of rapacity in the powerful, crippled the universities, and crushed the poor."

These injuries and difficulties, however, have been exaggerated. The cry has gathered in its passage through three centuries. Erasmus charged the Reformation with ruining literature, and proclaimed that the triumph of Lutheranism always involved the overthrow of learning. But Hallam

<sup>1</sup> Hallam, Constitutional History, i. c. 2.

has shown, that even when this accusation was uttered, the reforming exceeded the papal advocates, not only in erudition, but in number. Legends, indeed, of ferocious cruelty have descended to us through many narrators ; but some true passages of barbarity are blended with large portions of fiction. For example : we read of Cox, afterwards Bishop of Ely, applying himself so diligently to the destruction of books and MSS., that of the celebrated library which Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, bequeathed to Oxford, only one volume escaped his hand. This story has been properly met by an inquiry for the evidence, which is to brand so eminent a scholar with so disgraceful an act. It will be immediately confessed, that some of the reformers showed little regard to the cultivation of taste and learning. We are probably indebted to Melancthon for the protection of Greek and Latin, which his brethren were not indisposed to abandon as useless to theology. There is nothing singular in such an apparent insensibility to the beautiful and ornamental. The absorption of the thoughts in one great object easily explains it. The root draws all the nourishment to itself.

Nor were the spiritual benefits of the Reformation immediately manifest. They could not be. The waters of a vast flood had gone over the moral kingdom, working, in some places, an organic change in its construction. This is known to be the result in religious or political revolutions. Men gazed, with bewildered eyes, upon the altered sur-

face of society. The old landmarks were washed away; the familiar paths obliterated. The fields were not only to be reploughed, but reinclosed. The eye, confused by the catastrophe, and discovering few objects to which it had been accustomed, wandered over the scene with a wavering and restless anxiety. But besides the change of aspect, there was, also, another source of present danger. The retiring waters of every flood leave a deposit, from which exhalations prejudicial to moral healthfulness continually arise. In the dawn of the Reformation their effects would be peculiarly severe. The masses of the people were slightly imbued with the Protestant spirit. The faint warmth, therefore, of a nominal profession, only drew up the vapour without dispersing it. The sun of pure doctrine had ascended to its full height of splendour, before the atmosphere of religious thought became purified or kindled. We perceive this transparency at a later period, when the light had been for some time above the horizon.

The dissolution of the monasteries checked, as we have seen, the wandering ministry of the friars, without supplying their place. Religion had certainly gained no fervour of spirit in the rural districts, when Latimer, even in a town, was unable to collect a congregation. "I came," to follow his own lively narrative, "to a place, riding on a journey homeward from London, and I sent word over night into the town, that I would preach there in the morning, because it was a holiday, and methought

it was a holiday's work. The church stood in my way, and I took my horse and my company, and went thither. I thought I should have found company in the church, and when I came there the church door was fast locked. I tarried there half an hour or more; at last the key was found, and one of the parish comes to me and says—'Sir, this is a busy day with us; we cannot hear you; it is Robin Hood's day; the parish are gone abroad to gather for Robin Hood. I pray you let them rest.' I was fain, therefore, to give place to Robin Hood; I thought my rochet should have been regarded, though I were not; but it would not serve."<sup>1</sup>

This is a striking incident in episcopal life, and shows the temperature of the popular feeling in matters of religion. The degradation of the parochial clergy was also an evil. The pulpit, instead of being the centre of moral improvement, became, in numberless cases, an engine of the state. The supremacy of the king and the tyranny of the Pope often superseded the atonement of the Cross and the sanctification of the Spirit. Strype notices the baneful influence of this "political preaching."<sup>2</sup> The proclamation which appeared in April, 1548, had stripped the pastoral office of much of its remaining dignity. All preaching was interdicted, except under the licence of the king, the protector, or the primate. Even a bishop was compelled to authenticate his sermon with this authority. A general

<sup>1</sup> Sixth Sermon before Edward VI.

<sup>2</sup> Eccles. Mem. ii. i. 6, 141.



suspension of these licences was soon called for. They were succeeded by the appointment of six chaplains, "two to be ever present, and four always absent in preaching." One preacher labouring in a county could not be expected to see much fruit of his toil. Some of these husbandmen, however, hastily as they must have scattered the seed by the way-side, were cheered with the prospect of sheaves. The sowing of Aylmer, in Leicestershire, was abundantly blessed. In London, Hooper always preached once, sometimes twice, every day; and during his missionary visits to Essex, he may have considered himself bound to use additional exertion. Bernard Gilpin, lying down to rest upon the snows of Northumbrian valleys, is a noble example of primitive piety and endurance. Bradford pursued the same path.<sup>1</sup>

The return of Roman tyranny under Mary silenced the external activity, without benumbing the internal energy of the religious reform. The lights were extinguished in the windows, but the work was busily carried on within the house. Upon many an invisible forge, the armourer shaped the weapons with which the fight was to be fought in the following reign.

The age of Elizabeth is one of those elevations upon the surface of history from which we obtain an extensive and diversified view of our military, commercial, intellectual, and religious dawn and

<sup>1</sup> See particularly Chapter V. in Mr. Haweis' Sketches.



splendour. The scene is rendered more striking by the gradual scattering of the mist which the reign of Mary had breathed over it. But the first aspect of ecclesiastical affairs is not cheering. The reformers had directed their energies against two bulwarks of Romanism—the *supremacy of the pope*, and *the authority of unwritten tradition*. Upon these points of assault they were unanimous.<sup>1</sup> But the demolition of these strongholds of superstition left a site for building too large and attractive to be relinquished. It was in the adoption of a *plan* that their unanimity forsook them; agreeing in the rejection of the papal claims, they thought themselves justified in differing upon other subjects. The vision of one symmetrical scheme of doctrine gradually receded into a twilight of speculation that every day became weaker. Yet it did not vanish. It has been justly said that the semi-Paganism of Rome, and the democratic innovations of Geneva were equally avoided. “England settled her church on the broad ground of Catholicity;” Rome, on the contrary, seemed to gather herself into a sterner and remoter separation from every branch of the Christian family. The Trentine council destroyed the lingering vestiges of toleration. It stamped the mark of authority upon all the gathered antiquity of ignorance and superstition. It cannot be affirmed that the reformers rejected every custom because it bore the Roman

<sup>1</sup> Soames, Elizabethan Religious History.

sign. Monasteries had been suppressed ; but the system, under a purer development, was not condemned, but indirectly recognised in the preservation of our cathedrals. "Nor in those tasteful and magnificent monuments of ancient piety did public worship wholly lose its accustomed honours. The organ and the anthem still pealed through their vaulted aisles ; the sober light that streamed through their ' storied windows ' yet exhibited God's service under a considerable degree of pomp and ceremony."<sup>1</sup> The puritan historian affirms that foreigners were frequently unable to distinguish between the old and new worship, except by its celebration in the English tongue. This happy combination of an ancient form with a power of godliness exerted a beneficial influence over the minds of the laity. In the expressive words of Neal, it *deceived them into conformity* ; nine or ten years passed by before the papal interdict withdrew this large and increasing body into open hostility and separation. Of the population of England, a third part only might be designated protestant. The distinction of the majority was chiefly numerical. Of the more intellectual minority, a large portion had no other wish than to see restored the system which Mary had overthrown. The church of Edward was encircled by all the endearing sanctity of recollection. The kindred of the martyrs treasured in their hearts the precious sufferings of their an-

<sup>1</sup> Soames, Elizabethan Religious History, chap. viii., ix.

cestors. It has been well remarked, that thousands of anecdotes now forgotten and lost must have embalmed their memories in every village burial-ground and by every chimney-corner of England. The position of Elizabeth was one of extraordinary difficulty. Romanism allured her with the assurance of peace, and Lutheranism tempted her with offers of assistance. She made her choice, and kept it. The opinions formed in youth, she retained in age; and she did this in the midst of external violence and almost domestic opposition. Puritanism was cherished by Leicester and Essex. "It was favoured, more or less, by the wise councillors to whom she justly deferred—Cecil, Walsingham, Knollys, and Mildmay." She pursued the tenour of her path untroubled. To Whitgift and Parker, under God's grace, we are mainly indebted for this unbending decision of sentiment. It would be unbecoming to pass these illustrious men without a salutation of respect. Whitgift possessed a strong influence over the mind of his Mistress. In opinions moderate, in disposition generous, he patronised Hooker, and opposed Leicester. He was among the last of his order who dazzled the multitude by their splendid array of attendants, surrounding the episcopal function with the pageantry of baronial grandeur. His character presents a striking series of contrasts—now served upon the knee, and now dining among the poor brethren of his hospital at Croydon.

The name of Parker is still more famous. It

was observed by Pope, that some men, like some pictures, are fitter for a corner than a full light ; and the face always receives a heightening expression, if contemplated in the gilding sunshine of contemporary reputation, which vanishes when it is brought into the cold light of a remoter criticism. Parker exemplifies the remark. He was the moving and directing agent in the Elizabethan reforms, and his moral features have accordingly descended to us in different lights and colours. No man awoke intenser hatred from antagonists ; and perhaps the candour of his manners deprived him of the compensation of earnest friendship. The constitutional and ecclesiastical historians have alike reviled him ; while the Puritan and the Romanist have united in depreciating his character. Hallam notices his imperious and intolerant temper ; Neal condemns his luxurious desecration of the Sabbath ; Price despises him as a mere formalist, sacrificing principle to power, and the church to the monarchy. Fuller alone, in a few rapid words, renders justice to the zeal and honesty of his conduct. He, who kept the gates of discipline against the rush of superstition and the insults of dissent, ought surely to be mentioned with gratitude. The storm that had howled round him during life seemed to burst out with renewed violence over his death. He was buried in the chapel of Lambeth House ; and when it passed into the hands of Colonel Scott, a regicide, the bones were plundered from the leaden coffin

and tossed into a dunghill. At the Restoration, having been sought and recovered, they were re-committed to their original resting-place.<sup>1</sup>

There was one feature in the character of Elizabeth which influenced, though unconsciously and in a minor degree, the pulpit eloquence of her reign; and that was, her partiality to theatrical amusements and shows. Burbage, a name famous from its connexion with Shakspeare, obtained a royal licence for dramatic performances on Sunday. Eight theatres were open in London upon every Sabbath day. Bills of the amusements were scattered about the streets, and when the bell tolled to the lecture, the trumpet sounded to the stage. A contemporary preacher complains that the necessity of early attendance to secure a seat caused the churches to be empty while the theatres were full. The observance of the sabbath in the country was not always more strict. It sometimes happened, during the service, that the village church was surrounded by crowds of morris-dancers, jumping in nets. Efforts were certainly made to mitigate this desecration of the Lord's day. The Privy Council issued a condemnatory proclamation in 1581;<sup>2</sup> but an accident, which occurred in the following year at one of the most notable places of public resort, was a more effectual remedy; and fear helped to accomplish what authority was obliged to leave unfinished. One of the

<sup>1</sup> Elizabethan Religious History, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup> Harleian MS., quoted by Collier.

wooden galleries in Paris Garden fell, in the January of 1582, destroying several persons.<sup>1</sup>

However objectionable in its nature, this theatrical system was not altogether without its use. London at that period resembled Athens, in the fact of its instruction being derived from the theatre and the pulpit, as that of the Grecian city had been from the theatre and the bema. The dramatist and preacher of the one corresponded to the dramatist and orator of the other. There was no education, and, in a popular sense, no literature. The monopoly of the Stationers' Company closed the gate against the entrance of knowledge. In 1585, the employment of the printing press was limited to London, with the exception of two presses distributed between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Even that public machinery of learning was fettered by the Council, without whose permission not a page of manuscript could be transformed into type.

Theatres were the libraries of the people. The literature of the church received a colour from the national temper. The reader of Elizabethan sermons is unavoidably struck by the scenical turn of many images and expressions. The preacher is evidently addressing a congregation familiar with the action of the stage. Numerous examples might be adduced. Bishop Andrewes<sup>2</sup> alludes to a saying of a Latin writer, that all men personate some

<sup>1</sup> Collier, *History of Dramatic Poetry*, i. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Preaching on Ash Wednesday (1622) before James I. (Matthew, vii. 6.)



character, and that the actions of men resemble the scenes in a play: he then continues—"But our Saviour Christ, he goes further, he tells us here of a stranger matter: that there want not that make his church a very stage, and play with religion, and every part of it, so carrying themselves in things pertaining to God, as if they had some play or pageant in hand. It is but too true this. If you will set up a stage, I will find you actors for it anon. Will you see alms played? Out comes Judas sagely, with a sentence in his mouth, *ut quid perditio hæc?* Will you see prayer played? Look upon the players in the twenty-third chapter after, that under colour of a long prayer now and then, prey upon the houses and goods of a sort of reduced widows, and make as good gain of their prayers as Judas would have done of his alms." And a little further on, in the same discourse, he asks—"And in very deed, the marriage at Schechem, and the circumcision for it, Absalom's vow, Jehu's sacrifice, what were they but so many plays, mere masks, imitations of him that is *Roscius in scena*, the master-hypocrite of all?" Again, considering the words of St. John (i. 14), he speaks of the spectators of the miracles attending the birth and death of Jesus Christ, "as being in a theatre all the while, from the epitasis to the very catastrophe." Nominal religion he calls a *scenical, theatrical, histrionical godliness*.

Similar allusions abound in the works of Henry Smith, who was lecturer at St. Clement Danes, and

died in 1600. He was protected from the dangers, to which some of his opinions exposed him, by the great Lord Burleigh, to whom he inscribed his sermons.<sup>1</sup> They contain many forcible appeals to the conscience, frequently displaying this dramatic mode of expression. The following are specimens :—" When Iniquity hath played her part, Vengeance leaps upon the stage : ' The black guard shall attend upon you; you shall eat at the table of Sorrow; the crown of Death shall be on your heads, and many glittering faces shall be looking upon you." Here the picturesque grouping of the drama is easily recognised. The following passage is more striking; he has been delineating the guilt of Judas and applying the history to every unbelieving sinner :—" Be not deceived, for sin doth not end as it begins. When the terrors of Judas come upon the soul, the tongue cannot hide his sins, for despair and horror will not be smothered; but he, which hath Saul's spirit haunting him, will rage as Saul did. There is a warning conscience and a gnawing conscience. The warning conscience cometh before sin; the gnawing conscience followeth after sin. The warning conscience is often lulled asleep, but the gnawing conscience wakeneth her again. If there be any hell in this world, they which feel the worm of conscience gnaw upon their hearts, may say that they have felt the torments of hell. Who can express that man's horror but himself? Nay, what horrors are there

<sup>1</sup> " *Hæc pignera in grati animi testimonium consecravit.*"

<sup>2</sup> " The trumpet of the soul sounding to judgment."



which he cannot express himself? Sorrows are met in his soul at a feast, and Fear, Thought, and Anguish divide his soul between them. All the furies of hell leap upon his heart, like a stage. Thought calls to Fear; Fear whistleth to Horror; Horror beckoneth to Despair, and saith—‘Come and help me to torment this sinner!’ One saith that she cometh from this sin, and another saith that she cometh from that sin; so he goeth through a thousand deaths, and cannot die. Irons are laid upon his body, like a prisoner. All his lights are put out.”<sup>1</sup> The motion, the terror, the combination of the imagery, give to this description a tragic solemnity. Criticism has noticed a disposition in Dante, and in a slighter degree in Milton, to make the grotesque accessory to the terrible. The same inclination may be traced in the rude sketches of our elder preachers. The first sensation of the reader is often one of aversion. Reynolds turned aside in disgust from Poussin’s picture of Perseus and Medusa’s head, in which every principle of taste seemed to be sacrificed to the effect of horror. A closer examination changed his feeling into admiration. Perhaps the sentiments of Reynolds express our own in the contemplation of the portraiture of crime and repentance, which Smyth and his contemporaries dashed out with such tempestuous energy of passion. The graceful transition, the polished diction, the balanced period, the artful

<sup>1</sup> The Betraying of Christ—Matt. xxvii. 1.

interrogation, the sharp antithesis—all the varied yet harmonious symmetry of style—belonged to the refining process of a later age.

Hooker was the greatest man of the Elizabethan reign, to which he entirely belongs. Born in 1553, he died two years before the accession of James. He exercised a powerful and enduring influence upon his contemporaries and successors. Covel, Field, Raleigh, and others, were shaped by his teaching. He had his full share also in training up for the next generation Laud, Hammond, and Saunderson.<sup>1</sup> The Ecclesiastical Polity was the foundation-stone of a school in protestant divinity.<sup>2</sup> The eloquence of Hooker seems to have been forgotten in the panegyrics of his good sense. The “judicious Hooker” is the inscription of criticism upon his tomb. Judicious indeed; but he was more; in argument, vigorous and majestic; in sentiment, tranquil and lofty; in diction, stately and musical. Sidney preceded him by thirteen years. The Apology for Poetry appeared in 1581, and the Ecclesiastical Polity in 1594. Ben Jonson suggests a parallel between them. But the resemblance resides only in a certain dignity of utterance common to both. The fantastic graces of the Arcadia find no reflections in the Polity. In Hooker is seen a massiveness of intellect that awes the reader by its bulk : he is not altogether deficient in the playful

<sup>1</sup> Keble, Preface to Works of Hooker, civ.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabethan Religious History, 447.

foliage of imagery; but the shadow is thrown by the trunk, not by the branches.

From no predecessor or contemporary did Hooker derive those harmonious cadences, those sentences, so compact, and those learned idioms, that continue to charm the ear of the scholar. He built up our didactic prose, as Shakspeare created our drama. Puttenham had accurately defined style to be "a constant phrase, or tenour of speaking and writing, extending to the whole tale or process of the poem or history, and not properly to any piece or member of it."<sup>1</sup> This is the style of Hooker; it is uniform. Whence did he obtain it? Gray proposed an inquiry to Nichols, whether style in one language might be acquired through familiarity with polished writers in another; whether Middleton could have drawn his classic elegance from Cicero.<sup>2</sup> The Polity of Hooker might have answered the question. Cicero was his model. If the construction of his sentences be carefully examined, the imitation will be perceived. The Greek, and especially the Latin writers, sought to impart to prose a harmony, equivalent, although not similar to, that which distinguished their verse.<sup>3</sup> It is impossible to read a page of Cicero or Livy without becoming sensible of this arrangement. Tacitus has it in a different manner. The French writers, particularly Bossuet, copied the antique with great success. Hooker

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iii. ch. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Correspondence with Nichols. Ed. Mitford, 37.

<sup>3</sup> See Gibbon's remark, *Miscell. Works*, ii. 84, (1796.)

caught the cadence from Cicero; and if the following noble passage be compared with almost any page of the Latin writer's philosophical works, the resemblance will be apparent: "Dangerous it were for the feeble brain of man to wade far into the doings of the Most High, whom, although to know be life, and joy to make mention of his name; yet our soundest knowledge is to know, that we know him not, as indeed he is, neither can know him; and our safest eloquence concerning him is our silence, when we confess that his glory is inexplicable, his greatness above our capacity and reach."<sup>1</sup>

✓ In this sustained majesty of utterance the charm of Hooker resides. Taylor has flushes of imagination more changeful and lovely; Hall breathes sweeter strains of descriptive elegance; South sparkles in brighter epigrams; Barrow sheds more brilliant flames along the links of his argument; but Hooker alone preserves his dignity unviolated. It was doubtless this uniformity of style, reflected through a Latin translation, that drew from Clement VIII. the celebrated exclamation—"This man, indeed, deserves the name of an author. His books will get reverence by age, for there are in them such seeds of eternity, that, if the rest be like this, they shall endure till the last fire shall consume all learning."<sup>2</sup>

It has been shown that the theatrical amusements, which the Elizabethan court encouraged,

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. Polity, B. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Isaac Walton.

and the multitude loved, were not unfelt even by theologians of the times. Hooker would be another witness. It marked the watchful zeal of the clergy thus to quicken the immediate impression of their teaching, by adapting it, in some measure, to the prevailing taste and manners of their learners. They might have pleaded the example of St. Paul, who seems to have continually turned his eye to the Greek theatre for illustrations and images; and whose noble admonition to the Corinthians, respecting the vanity of human life and worldly distinctions, can only be interpreted by the analogy of the drama.

Hallam considers few of the Elizabethan divines to have been eminent for ecclesiastical erudition. He excepts Hooker and Jewell; the latter with some reservation. He mentions the Hebrew erudition of Hugh Broughton, but regards Rainolds as the most profound scholar of the reign. With Hooker and Jewell he completes a triumvirate of learning. They were alike celebrated at Oxford, though in different paths of knowledge. Jewell in the rhetorical, Hooker in the logical, and Rainolds in the Greek lecture. But if these were the intellectual giants of the age, many of noble stature and graceful bearing might be collected to follow in their train. Instead of complaining that the scholars of that epoch were not deeper or more accomplished, we ought, perhaps, to wonder that they acquired so much, and disposed their acquisitions so well. Consider the situation of a theological stu-

dent. He sat down to write amid a war of religious elements. The husbandry of superstition was diligently carried on; the incursions of popery were constant and alarming. It might have been expected that our sacred eloquence, thus harassed on every side, stunned by clamour, confronted by hatred—without that leisurely self-contemplation which can alone communicate the graces of taste—would have appeared in the public thoroughfares with something of squalid misery and mendicant costume;

“ Dira illuvies, immissaque barba,  
Consertum tegmen spinis.”

The case is different; and we cannot but feel some admiration of these early worthies of our theological literature, thus patiently lingering round the festival of poetry, philosophy, and wisdom yet graver and purer, while the clouds of political storms kept driving over head, and the wings of polemical harpies descended upon the board.



## CHAPTER IV.

- I. Improved aspect of the Church at the close of the sixteenth century.—II. Form of religious controversy undergoes a change.—III. Attempted combination of old with reformed doctrines.—IV. Andrewes, the founder of this school. His character; his sermons:—their vigour and beauty of sentiment;—their defects.—V. Donne, Dean of St. Paul's; state of literature when he grew up. His eloquence illustrated by a remark of Sir Joshua Reynolds.—VI. Coleridge's division of our theological authors.

AS the sixteenth century declined, an improvement became perceptible in the general aspect of the parochial clergy. In 1599, the preachers, catechists, and exhorters amounted to five thousand. The statistical account of the English and Welsh dioceses in 1603 gives also a favourable view of the progress of religious instruction. In the diocese of London, five hundred and three preachers are enumerated.<sup>1</sup> The education of the ministry and the people had rapidly advanced. When James I. ascended the throne, the Church of the preceding century seemed to occupy a remote position. The early portion of the seventeenth century has been regarded as the most learned period in the literature

<sup>1</sup> See Haweis, (Appendix, 306.)



of Europe. A change in the style of religious controversy had begun to manifest itself before the close of the Elizabethan reign. Retiring from the beaten paths of popular objections, it took up its ground among the fathers, and what it lost in scriptural, it supplied in ecclesiastical support. The historical character, which Romanists had always endeavoured to communicate to the dispute, unavoidably gave an impulse to the studies, and a colour to the arguments of their opponents. Hallam deduces from this new method of warfare several important influences upon religious opinion.<sup>1</sup> Assuming the necessity of learning to guide the judgment, it restricted the right of judgment to the learned. The copious industry of research brought difficulties in its train; the more distant the regions of patristic erudition which it visited, the more various were the impressions and fruits of its travels; and men began to have a wavering perception of the true features of doctrines, which they had contemplated not only in the sunshine of gospel-simplicity, but in the twilight of a speculative interpretation. Perhaps the last result was the most injurious. The Romanist was not always vanquished in the argument, and the defeated combatant sometimes went over to the standard of the conqueror. To counteract these dangers, by reducing the opposite creeds into a combination, a new system of theology was introduced. The

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to Literature of Europe, iii. 50.

remark is Hallam's, and with some modifications may be admitted to be just.

In the physical world, the harmony of the elements is maintained by the action of several laws: among these are *attraction* and *repulsion*. In the same manner, might Andrewes and his brethren have hoped, by God's grace, to regulate the religious elements of thought; restraining the vehement spirit of Protestant *repulsion*, by bringing to bear upon it the *attractive* influence of pure and fervent Catholic principles. It was in accordance with their system, to claim a sincere reverence towards the authority of the Church; to affirm the sacredness of an Apostolic ministry, deriving its torch from the hands of the first preachers of the Faith; and to assert the fitness, as well as the sanctity, of a splendid ceremonial. The commencement of this theological school has been ascribed to Andrewes, although Laud is frequently regarded as its founder, and constantly praised, or censured, as its head. His conference with the Jesuit Fisher is frequently noticed with exultation by Romanistic writers. If Laud cherished and propagated the plant, Andrewes sowed the seed. Of this remarkable person it is impossible to speak without feelings of veneration and love. His defects are lost in the almost unclouded light of his piety and truth. His biography is a panegyric of Christian practice; a man he was, in the words of those who knew him, "as if he had been made up of learning and virtue." In patristic learning he has been considered to excel every

bishop of the Elizabethan age, his contemporary Usher alone excepted; who more properly belongs to the succeeding reign. But the acquisitions of Andrewes swept over the universal field of knowledge. Laud and Buckeridge, who edited his sermons by the particular desire of Charles I., professed their ignorance of any description of learning to which he was a stranger. He was acquainted with modern, not less than ancient languages. His discourses are unsurpassed for vigour of argument, fertility of illustration, and fervour of sentiment. They present the union of striking faults with rare excellences. "As to the charge that they abound in puns and quibbles, and that, as they had a tendency to debase the English language, so they were calculated rather to excite a smile than to strike conviction, it is sufficient to be said that the sermons themselves have only to be read to refute the accusation."<sup>1</sup> This is the defence of an ardent admirer. It mixes some error with truth. Andrewes certainly indulges in every variety of verbal playfulness, which seems, however, to awaken our surprise, not our ridicule. He is an earlier Cowley, in prose. A few examples may be offered. He commences a sermon on Christmas-day (Ephes. i. 10) in this manner—"Seeing the text is of seasons, it would not be out of season itself, and though it be never out of season to speak of Christ, yet even Christ hath his seasons. 'Your time is always,' saith he,

<sup>1</sup> Preface to Oxford Edition, 1841.

so is not mine; I have my seasons. One of which seasons is this, the season of his birth, whereby all 'recapitulate in heaven and earth,' which is the season of the text. And so, this is a text of the season." Again, (Matt. iii. 8,) "Never trust a repentance repentine, no sudden flash or brunt. It is altogether an error to think repentance a matter of no more moment than to be despatched in a moment." This verbal jingle appears to have been peculiarly grateful to his ear. Milton has been blamed for introducing scientific images into his poem; but, when Andrewes seeks to express the mighty obligations of the sinner to the atoning righteousness of the Saviour, he goes to algebra for an illustration, and tells us that "many a broken reckoning we shall find there, such *surd numbers*, such fractions we shall meet with, we shall not tell how or when to get through, we shall want counters."

These are peculiarities which obscure, without materially impairing, the clearness and energy of his style. Behind all the shadows of ingenious and wilful fancy, glows a kindling light of religious truth. Often, like that poet who has so exquisitely described the pleasures of Christian life, he may seem to lose an hour in unprofitable reveries. But the charm is soon broken. Some of the "sad music of humanity," to which his ear was always listening, steals into his hermitage, summoning home—

"The recollected powers, and, snapping short  
The glassy threads with which the fancy weaves  
Her brittle toys, restores him to himself."

Conscious of the speculative tendency of contemporary theology, perhaps not entirely blind to the inclination of his own intellect, he remarks, (Sermon III.) that while points of curious investigation are the most pleasing, points of practice are more profitable to the hearer. He happily exemplifies his own observation (Sermon IV.) that the way to consider many texts *is to take them in pieces*. He takes a text to pieces, not only to display its beautiful construction, but to show the office which each separate member performs. The reader will find this quality manifested in a sermon preached before James on Ash Wednesday, (Joel, ii. 12, 13,) where, speaking of the turning of the penitent heart to God, he says—"Repentance is nothing else but a 'kind of circling,' to return to Him by repentance from Whom by sin we have turned away. And much after a circle is this text; it begins with the word 'turn,' and returns about to the same word again; which circle consists, to use the Prophet's own word, of two turnings; for twice he repeats this word, which two must needs be two different motions: (1) one is to be done with 'the whole heart;' (2) the other, with it 'broken and rent.' So as one and the same it cannot be. First, a 'turn,' wherein we look forward to God, and with our 'whole heart' resolve to 'turn' to Him. Then a turn again, wherein we look backward to our sins wherein we have turned from God, and with beholding them, our very heart breaketh. These two are two distinct, both in nature and names; one,

conversion from sin; the other, contrition for sin. One, resolving to amend that which is to come; the other, reflecting and sorrowing for that which is past. One, declining from evil to be done hereafter; the other, sentencing itself for evil done heretofore. These two between them make up a complete repentance, or, (to keep the word of the text,) a perfect revolution."<sup>1</sup> In the application of the prophet Micah's apostrophe (v. 2) to Bethlehem Ephratah, we seem to listen to the sweetest accents of Bishop Hall. It occurs in the tenth sermon upon the Nativity.

The style of Andrewes has much apparent diffuseness and irregularity. But it is formed upon a principle. Coleridge traced an architectural construction in the Greek sentences, parts being insignificant in regard to the general effect. The same relation of parts to the whole may be discovered in our elder writers, especially in Andrewes, Donne, or Saunderson. The principle of cohesion, which Coleridge happily calls the sequence of their logic, binds all the parts together. As the shrines and chapels that wind out of the aisle of a cathedral belong to the same edifice, because they are under the same roof, so these digressions of the preacher—little shrines of imagination attached to the sermon—are members of the same structure of eloquence, because they are overhung by the grandeur of one sacred and predominant conception. But

<sup>1</sup> Fourth Sermon of Repenting and Fasting.



the preacher returns from these fantastic wanderings with renewed energy. If his edifice of truth present the embellishment and mystery of the shrine, it also exhibits the full lustre and majesty of the choir. His narrowest and darkest intricacies of argument open into passages of flowing dignity, beauty, and grace. In his fifth sermon, preached in 1610, he examines the declaration of the angels to the shepherds that a Saviour is born unto them, which is *Christ the Lord*, and proceeds to investigate the title of Saviour with a vivacity of argument and force of manner that recal Pearson to the memory.

Born eight years, and dying five years after Andrewes, Donne divided with him the admiration and the influence of the age. More fortunate than his contemporary, the history of his life has been recorded by the delightful pen of Walton. It presents three aspects of mental cultivation to the eye. Under the first, we see the friend of poets; under the second, the student of the law; under the third, the preacher of the Gospel. His earlier residence in London had introduced him to the society of the most accomplished and gifted persons of the time. He had seen Shakspeare; he knew Jonson. From that remarkable man—a philosopher, without the name, and a theologian, without the profession—he could not but derive many aids to grave and sublime reflection. His lines had fallen unto him in pleasant places. On every side, his eye received the rays of learning, and the colouring warmth of fancy. Like Cowley, he might have



found the Faery Queen in a parlour window, for he was twenty-five years old when Spenser died. The glory of Shakspeare's genius fell around him, as he rose to fame in the pulpit of St. Paul's. If the poetical associations of Donne sometimes defaced the grandeur of his theology, his legal acquirements tended largely to sustain it. They not only shaped, but guided his imagination. They kept the ship steady under the sail which the poetical temperament so eagerly crowds on, and assisted him, not only in riding out the storms of controversy, but in fighting the battles and winning the victories of truth. Hallam discovers ingenuity and learning in the discourses of Donne, but employed to collect the impertinences of scholastic subtlety and the distorted allegories of the Fathers. It was scarcely to be hoped that a curiosity, busy with the survey of the wide surface of literature during three centuries, would linger long upon a single nook in the remote province of theology. Certainly no justice has been rendered in Hallam's elaborate work to the extraordinary merits of Donne. Coleridge, as he studied them with a more patient research, so he commended them with a more generous applause. Sir Joshua Reynolds, when travelling through Germany, saw at Cologne a picture, by Breugel, of the Slaughter of the Innocents which, in the utter destitution of the graces of composition, displayed sufficient *thinking* for twenty pictures. Reynolds compared it to the poetry of Donne; but it is more illustrative of his prose. He piles thought upon

thought, and bewilders the reader with the luxury of invention. There is, nevertheless, in all his sermons a logical method, perfectly exact and rigid, though different from our own. However grotesque his style of architecture may sometimes be, no extravagance is introduced which was not in the original design. Much of the intricacy that perplexes a modern reader arises from his habit of contemplating objects through an imaginative medium, and from speaking to men who were not too indolent to think, nor too practical to be pleased. In considering the petition of our Lord, "*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*,"<sup>1</sup> he says that the words will "be fittest considered, like a goodly palace, if we rest a little, as in an outward court, upon consideration of prayer in general; and then draw the view of a palace in a second court, considering this precious prayer in particular, as the face of the whole palace. Thirdly, we will pass through the chiefest rooms of the palace itself; and then insist upon four steps—1, of whom he begs (Father); 2, what he begs (forgive them); 3, that he prays upon reason (for); 4, what the reason is (they know not)." It was perhaps the skilful anatomy of his subject—sometimes manifesting logical acuteness of the highest order—that induced Coleridge to notice the importance which he gave to the single words of a text, making every word a text of itself.

<sup>1</sup> Sermon cxv.

✓ The popular theological taste which Andrewes and Donne cherished, they did not create. It was growing up rapidly when they appeared. The restoration of learning had awakened a love of classical images. Andrewes was only flattering it, when he enforced a moral truth by a line from Horace's "Art of Poetry." Donne, in his 105th Sermon, refers very happily to the prevalent feeling—"In sheep pastures, you may plant fruit-trees in the hedge-rows; but if you plant them all over, it is an orchard; you may transfer flowers of secular learning into these exercises, but if they consist of those, they are but themes or essays." His own sermons can never be brought within such a degrading definition. He said,<sup>1</sup> while beseeching his hearers to gather some of the healing herbs, that no flowers or things of sweetness grew in his ground; but, in truth, there often comes up from it a delicious odour of piety, *like the smell of a field that the Lord hath blessed*. Every page is bright with Gospel-truth; and by ✓ no writer of the English church have the doctrines of salvation been brought forward and enforced with a more perfect candour, a more convincing cogency of exposition, or a more attractive grace of recommendation. But the mark of genius is upon every passage; things old come from the treasury of his mind with all the lustre of novelty.

If he desire to give us consolation under difficulty,

<sup>1</sup> Sermon cxii.

how does he clothe it? “All God’s prophecies are thy histories; whatsoever he hath promised others, he hath done in his purpose for thee; and all God’s histories are thy prophecies; all that he hath done for others, he owes thee.”<sup>1</sup> Does he seek to press upon our hearts the blessings of Christ’s nativity? Mark his manner: “The kingdom of heaven was but a reversion to the patriarchs, and it is no more to us: two lives, two comings of Christ, before they could come to their state; Christ must come first in the flesh, and he must come again to judgment. To us, and in our case, one of these lives is spent; Christ is come in the flesh; and therefore, as the earth is warmer an hour after the sun sets, than it was an hour before the sun arose, so let our faith and zeal be warmer now after Christ’s departing out of the world, than theirs was before his coming into it.”<sup>2</sup> Is a man negligent of the task which he is called to fulfil, and of the talents which he ought to lay out? “He that stands in a place, and does not the duty of that place, is but a statue in that place, and but a statue without an inscription; posterity shall not know him, nor read who he was.”<sup>3</sup>

Or take an example of doctrine beautifully illustrated and applied. He is showing the dreadful impiety of pleading the decree of God, in extenuation of the wickedness of man. “No man can assign a reason in the sun, why his body casts

<sup>1</sup> Sermon cvii.<sup>2</sup> Sermon clxv.<sup>3</sup> Sermon clxvi.

a shadow ; why all the place round about him is illuminated by the sun, the reason is in the sun ; but of his shadow there is no other reason but the grossness of his own body ; why there is any beam of light, any spark of life in my soul, he that is the Lord of light and life, and would not have me die in darkness, is the only cause ; but of the shadow of death wherein I sit, there is no cause but my own corruption. And this is the cause why I *do* sin ; why I *should* sin, there is none at all.”<sup>1</sup> One more instance may be given, rather for its verbal happiness and familiar truth than for any brilliancy of sentiment. “You cannot have a better debtor, a better paymaster than Christ Jesus ; for all your entails and all your perpetuities do not so nail, so hoop in, so rivet an estate in your posterity, as to make the Son of God your son too, and to give Christ Jesus a child’s part with the rest of your children.”<sup>2</sup> For a specimen of ingenious argument and subtlety of deduction, not often equalled, his interpretation of Ezekiel (xxxiv. 19) may be consulted.<sup>3</sup>

But the glory of Donne resides in the earnest rapture with which he proclaims the freedom, the universality of human redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ. The shadow of the Cross stretches  
✓ over the entire circle of his eloquence and learning. “No man violates the power of the Father, the

<sup>1</sup> Sermon cxxxviii.

<sup>2</sup> Sermon clv., at Paul’s Cross, 1622.

<sup>3</sup> Sermon cv.

wisdom of the Son, the goodness of the Holy Ghost, so much as he who thinks himself out of their reach, or the latitude of their working.”<sup>1</sup>

James the First was a learned monarch, and Donne was his favourite preacher. Perhaps some of his conceits grew out of the favour of the patron. There is one circumstance, connected with the ecclesiastical history of that reign, which furnishes a curious and emphatic commentary upon the adulation, which the most devoted and holy men were not ashamed to offer to the king. From the time when James ascended the throne, until Laud prevailed upon Charles the First to alter the custom, “it was the fashion that at whatever time in the service the king might enter, prayers were broken off, the anthem began, and the preacher went into the pulpit.”<sup>2</sup>

Coleridge divided our elder theological writers into three classes — 1. Apostolic, or Pauline ; 2. Patristic ; 3. Papal. Latimer and Ridley would exemplify the first ; Andrewes and Donne, the second ; while, according to the theory of Coleridge, Bishop Taylor would stand in the front of the third. He is inclined to mark two great divisions, two eras, in the doctrines of the English church ; the *first* extending from Ridley to Field, or from the time of Edward VI. to the closing years of James I. ; the *second*, commencing with that period, and ending with Bull and Stillingfleet. He finds the

<sup>1</sup> Sermon cxx.

<sup>2</sup> Robertson. How to Conform to the Liturgy, p. 133.



peculiar excellences of the earlier class, in their deep and practical view of the mystery of redemption, regarded in the relation of *man* to the *act* and the *Author*, and including, therefore, what are called the *inchoative* states of regeneration and saving Grace; while the latter class are thought to have possessed a clearer perception of the nature and necessity of redemption, in the *relation of God to man*; and especially of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity, which appears in their writings with unmutilated majesty. The last circumstance may be chiefly ascribed to the publication of the famous treatise of Bishop Bull, in 1685.



## CHAPTER V.

- I. Jeremy Taylor; his autobiography and letters destroyed; compared with Berkeley.—II. His birth; related to the martyr Taylor.—III. Sent to Cambridge grammar-school; removed to Caius College.—IV. Bonney's outline of University education at the beginning of the 17th century; Milton's view of it; its true character.—V. Becomes a Fellow of Caius; and is patronized by Laud.—VI. Election to All Souls', and presentation to Uppingham; his marriage; interesting letter to his brother-in-law.—VII. Dark days; is deprived of his living by the parliament; his successor described.—VIII. Attends the army as one of the king's chaplains; his military phraseology noticed.

CORREGGIO is said to be the only great painter of Italy, who left no authenticated portrait of himself; of the still more interesting delineations of the mind, which autobiography supplies, literature possesses few specimens. Those whom we admire the most, we generally know the least; and if we hope to discover any lineaments of Shakspeare, or Spenser, they must be sought in their works. It might have once been expected that Taylor would have escaped the general destiny of genius. His lineal descendant, William Todd Jones, among the rich materials he had collected for a history of his celebrated ancestor, enumerated

a series of autograph letters between the bishop and his friends; and “a family book, also in his handwriting, giving an account of his parentage and the principal events of his life, with comments on many of the public transactions, in which he himself, or those connected with him, had borne a share.” Mr. Jones died in 1818, and the MSS. of Taylor are supposed to have been destroyed in a fire that consumed the Custom House of London. A few extracts which he had made from the papers, together with some slight traditionary information, were communicated by the surviving members of the family to Bishop Heber, who has included them in his Memoir. Coleridge thought that Taylor and Berkeley, the accomplished friend of Pope, presented the most attractive combination of the divine, the scholar, and the gentleman; and certainly, if we lament the autobiography of the one, we may breathe a sigh for the journal of the other, containing a familiar account of his travels in Italy, which was lost in the extinction of his family.<sup>1</sup> The disappointment occasioned by the published confessions of Bishop Patrick, may tend to mitigate our apprehensions of the injury we have sustained in the destruction of Taylor’s. But it is not probable

<sup>1</sup> Southey, *Omniana*, i. 251. Coleridge asserts, (*Literary Remains*, i. 303,) that there is now extant, in MS., a folio volume of unprinted sermons by Jeremy Taylor. It would be very interesting to learn in what region of the world so great a treasure has been suffered to rust, during a hundred and fifty years.

that his vivacious spirit would have stooped to so constant a depression, or that the history of his own mind and fortunes would have flowed in so sluggish a stream. We might not have been welcomed into his parlour at Mandinnam with the engaging frankness of Cowley; but something we should have learned of his pastoral cares, anxieties, and hopes,

— “ that best portion of a good man’s life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love.”

Jeremy Taylor was born at Cambridge, in the parish of the Holy Trinity, in 1613; the day is not ascertained; but the register fixes his baptism on the 15th of August in that year. His father was a barber in the town, though his ancestors enjoyed for many years a small estate at Frampton, in Gloucestershire. He traced his descent from the celebrated Rowland Taylor, who perished at the stake in the third year of Mary. His illustrious descendant might have looked back with feelings of affectionate veneration to the sacred learning of the martyr. He had read over—in those days a most rare achievement—the entire works of St. Augustine, Cyprian, Eusebius, Origen, and other fathers; and of his study of the canon-law we have an exemplification in his rebuke to Bishop Gardiner, who, in the intemperance of his fury, had called him *an ignorant beetle-brow*; an incautious ebullition of temper in a man, upon whose countenance the stern malevolence and cruelty of

his heart were so legibly written. Two houses are mentioned by Heber, as claiming the honour of having been the birthplace of Taylor; both are inns; one, called the Wrestlers, is situated in the Petty Cuzy; the other, known as the Bull, opposite Trinity Church, is considered to have the strongest evidence in its favour.<sup>1</sup> Taylor's father was churchwarden of his parish in 1621; and while discharging the humble duties of his calling, seems not to have been indifferent to the cultivation of his mind. We gather from an allusion in his son's letter to Bachcroft, his tutor at Caius, that he was "reasonably learned," and had "solely grounded his children in grammar and the mathematics."<sup>2</sup> In 1615, Dr. Stephen Perse, Senior Fellow of Caius, bequeathed an endowment for a free school in Cambridge, which must have been opened with very little delay, since in 1616 we find Taylor among the pupils, being then only three years old. Our knowledge of the circumstance is derived from the admission-book of Caius College. He is there stated to have remained ten years, under the tuition of the master, Lovering. From this school, August 18, 1626, he was transferred to Caius, in the humble rank of a sizar; the register calls him a poor scholar. The records of the college speak of his having completed his fifteenth year, while his friend, Bishop Rust,<sup>3</sup> informs

<sup>1</sup> See note to Heber's Life, (Appendix) A; and Life, by Archdeacon Bonney, p. 2. Mr. Hughes, however, differs from this opinion.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jones's MS., quoted by Heber.

<sup>3</sup> Funeral Sermon.

us that, "by the time he was thirteen years old, he was entered into Caius College." The date given by Rust is adopted by Bonney and Heber, with a suggestion that his parents may have represented him to be older than he was, to facilitate his admission. But it has not been discovered that any limitation of age existed in the university; and it ought to be remembered that the *baptism*, not the *birth*, of Taylor is ascertained. We have no anecdotes of his boyish days, and know not whether, like Cowley, he could have referred to any productions of his dawning intellect, and have marked some traces of himself in the little footsteps of a child.<sup>1</sup>

Bonney has drawn a pleasing picture of the course of study pursued at Cambridge in the early part of the 17th century. He thinks that the powerful mind of Bacon had already begun to exercise a beneficial influence upon the popular, and even the learned temper of the age; Greek and Latin literature was assiduously cultivated; and a softer refinement gradually prevailed over the scholastic barbarisms of a former century. He discovers a system of education possessing the advantages which Bacon had afforded, but having still to receive the further improvement of the Newtonian philosophy; and to its influence he refers many of the brilliant ornaments and radical defects conspicuous in the writings of Taylor.<sup>2</sup> Heber, though recognising abundant testimony to Taylor's acquaintance with

<sup>1</sup> Cowley.

<sup>2</sup> Life of Taylor, p. 6.

the logic of Aristotle, was unable to identify a "single allusion to those principles which Bacon first laid down." But the truth is, that the charming vision of Bonney dissolves in the light of criticism. It happens that, in 1625, only one year before Taylor became a member of Caius, a youthful student had taken up his abode in the neighbouring shade of Christ's College. The student was the future author of *Paradise Lost*, then transplanted from St. Paul's School, in his seventeenth year, and full of classical ardour and taste. With what feelings he contemplated the plan of academic instruction, he has himself told us, in his accustomed warmth and energy of expression, when declaring his determination not to be "deluded with ragged notions and brabblements, and dragged to an asinine feast of sow-thistles and brambles." We possess evidence of the corruptions of Cambridge education, more distinct and authoritative than the angry remembrances of Milton may be thought to supply. Beaumont, the author of *Psyche*, had been appointed to the tutorship of Peterhouse about 1640, and his biographer thus speaks of the manner in which he filled his office:—"Though he found himself tied down by the practice of the schools, to the drudgery of teaching his pupils the tedious and heavy system of *Duns Scotus and Avezsoes, and the rest of the subtle philosophers of that date*, yet by the pertinent reflections he used, and the art of disentangling their minds from the perplexities of that metaphysical jargon, and leading them to the sub-



stantial knowledge of the duties of religion," he contrived to mitigate the disgust of his hearers, and even to cultivate their minds.<sup>1</sup> Milton's Vacation Exercise, where Ens is represented as the father of the Predicaments, shows the elements with which a poetical mind was compelled to work. He is said to have felt, in after life, a great admiration for the genius of Taylor; a strong mental resemblance may be traced between them; and a jargon that grated upon the ear of the poet, must have been equally displeasing to the future Chrysostom of his country.

Taylor took his bachelor's degree in 1631. Rust asserts, that "as soon as he was graduate, he was chosen fellow." Heber rejects this statement. Yet it comes from one singularly well qualified to make it; from a member of the same university, the friend and companion of Taylor's latter years. Nor is the assertion of Rust left without support. In a MS. history of Caius College, Taylor is said to have resigned a Perse fellowship in the beginning of 1635. Of the authenticity of this document no doubt was entertained by the learned master of the college, who assisted a recent editor of Taylor's Sermons in his inspection of it.<sup>2</sup> His official connexion with that society is also recognised by the absence-book, in which a record is kept of the coming and going "of all scholars and fellows whose stipend partly

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for this interesting reference to the Rev. John Mitford.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Hughes, Memoir prefixed to selected Works of Taylor, 1831.



depends on their time of residence." The first insertion of Taylor's name in the list of fellows occurs on the 8th of November, 1633.

The stream of his history now begins to wind out of the seclusion in which it had hitherto flowed. Having proceeded to his degree of Master of Arts, he was soon afterwards ordained, and, like the illustrious Usher, before he had completed his twenty-first year. A request of a college friend, one Riden, to preach for him at St. Paul's, where he was lecturer, was the fortunate cause of Taylor's introduction to Laud, then Archbishop of Canterbury. His youth, his eloquence, and his exceeding beauty of appearance and charm of manner, made a lively impression upon his congregations, who took him, in the inflated language of Rust, "for some young angel, newly descended from the visions of glory." Rumours of his powers and reputation quickly reached Lambeth, whither he was summoned to preach before the Primate. The result might have been anticipated. Laud withdrew him from the excitement of a London life, commenced before his faculties had attained to their full growth, into the repose of All Souls', where, in the words of Lloyd,<sup>1</sup> "he might have time, books, and money to complete himself in those several parts of learning into which he had made so fair an entrance." Rust tells us that the sermon of Taylor excited the wonder of Laud; "it was beyond exception and beyond

<sup>1</sup> Memoirs, 702.

imitation; yet the wise prelate thought him too young; but the great youth humbly begged his grace to pardon that fault, and promised, *if he lived, he would mend it.*"<sup>1</sup>

Heber supposes Taylor not to have resumed his residence in Cambridge after this flattering interview with the Archbishop, and assigns to that period of his life a traditional sojourn at Maidley Hall, near Tamworth, in Staffordshire. He offers this conjecture on the authority of a correspondent of the Gentleman's Magazine.<sup>2</sup> But if he had looked further into that repository of so much that is curious in our literary history, he would have seen a correction of the preceding information. Nine years later, a person, well instructed in topographical subjects, proposed to substitute Madely, in the northern district of the county, or Tanworth, in Warwickshire, for Tamworth; no place corresponding with Maidley Hall being found near that town.<sup>3</sup> But, in whatever rural retirement Taylor may have spent his intervals of leisure, he did not leave Cambridge until the autumn of 1635. In the October of that year, he visited his college for a single day, arriving on the 13th and departing on the 14th;<sup>4</sup> and we may conclude that the object of his journey was to complete the necessary arrangements for retiring finally from the university. That he travelled immediately to Oxford is more than probable; for, upon the 20th

<sup>1</sup> Funeral Sermon.

<sup>2</sup> 1783, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> February, 1792.

<sup>4</sup> Absence-book of Caius College, quoted by Mr. Hughes.

of the same month, he was admitted to the rank of Master of Arts in University College. Nor is Taylor's possession of a fellowship at Cambridge at all incompatible with Heber's conjecture—that Laud, in consideration of his inability, by reason of poverty, to prolong his abode at Cambridge, may have desired to transplant him to Oxford, where his own powers of patronage were so extensive. The fellowship which Taylor held at Caius, not being on the foundation, afforded him few privileges and produced only a small stipend. Perhaps the migration may not have been displeasing to him from other causes. It is not uncharitable to believe that his brilliant fancy shed too rich a lustre for the heavy eyesight of mathematical learning; and that his scorn of a system, so calculated to petrify the genius into a dunce, might have been expressed with more candour than prudence.

The industry of his latest biographer has not been entirely successful in dispersing the obscurity of his election to All Souls'. The letter of Laud to the warden and fellows of that college is preserved among the Tanner MSS.<sup>1</sup> The most remarkable passage is the following:—"Mr. Osborn, being to give over his fellowship, was with me at Lambeth, and, I thank him, freely proffered me the nomination of a scholar to succeed in his place." Heber, a member of the same society, and having access to the MS. notes of a fellow, contemporary with Taylor, was

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Bliss in his edition of Wood.

only able to explain this offer of Osborn upon the supposition, that he may have expressed the general wish and feeling of the college, in requesting its visitor to select a new member. The Warden, however, interposed an objection, of which the Archbishop would seem to have been unconscious. "Neither can I learn," he writes in the same letter with reference to the election of Taylor, "that there is anything in your local statutes against it." But, in truth, the statutes distinctly require candidates to be of three years' standing in the university, and only ten days had elapsed since Taylor had been incorporated from Cambridge. In the face of this difficulty, the majority of the fellows voted for his admission, but the Warden refused to concur in the election. "Under these circumstances, the fellows persisting in their choice, no election at all took place, but the nomination devolved in due course to the Archbishop as visitor of the college, who thus acquired the right of appointing Taylor, by his sole authority, to the vacant situation, on the 14th of January, 1636." Heber expresses some astonishment that he should have been made an actual fellow without the usual period of probation—a privilege restricted to the kindred of the founder. But the difficulty is of his own creation. According to the register of All Souls,<sup>1</sup> Taylor did really pass a preparatory interval; being elected probationary fellow, Nov. 3, 1635,

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Dr. Bliss, Wood's *Athenæ*.

and actual fellow, January 14th, 1636. Of his Oxford life the memorials are slight and imperfect. Rust says, that love and admiration still waited upon him, and adds, "that he was much admired for his excellent casuistical preaching." Of these discourses, only one has been recovered. Nor is it probable that he appeared very frequently in the university pulpit. His official intercourse with Laud, of whom he was the "most observant and obliged chaplain,"<sup>1</sup> frequently called him from Oxford; and in the early spring of 1637 (March 23), he was presented to the rectory of Uppingham, in Rutlandshire. Rust informs us that it was bestowed upon him by "my Lord of Canterbury," who soon after "preferred him to be chaplain to King Charles the Martyr." Laud might procure what he had apparently no right to give. The patron of the living was Juxon, Bishop of London, whom Pepys noticed twenty-six years afterwards, as "a man well spoken of by all good men."

Uppingham, originally belonging to the Abbey of Westminster, had been granted to Ridley, and his successors in the see of London, in the fourth year of Edward VI. Though a market-town, its population must have been small; for in 1801, the census returned only fourteen hundred persons. Leland, visiting it in the former half of the 16th century, found "one mean street and a very

<sup>1</sup> His own expression in the dedication of the Sermon on Nov. 5, 1638.

mean church." There is, however, an extensive view from the southern side of the church-yard; and when Evelyn travelled through the town in the autumn of 1654, he thought it pretty and well built of stone, "which is a rarity in that part of England."

"Taylor had now," is the remark of Heber, "a still better reason than his chaplaincy for making his residence at All Souls' occasional only." Some private feelings may have contributed to render a prolonged abode in Oxford unpleasing to him. He had not probably forgotten the Warden's opposition to his election. Writing to Sheldon, when many years had gone over his head, he observed, "Two debts you are pleased to forgive me, one of money, the other of unkindness; I thank you for both; but this latter debt was contracted when I understood not you, and less understood myself; but I dare say there was nothing in it but folly and imprudence. But I will not do it so much favour as to excuse it. If it was displeasing to you then, it is much more to me now that I know of it." In Sheldon he found a generous adversary, who admired his genius, while he objected to the irregular manner in which Laud had rewarded it.

Taylor was selected by his patron, the Archbishop, to preach at St. Mary's, on November 5, 1638; and I have had the gratification of reading his discourse in a copy rendered invaluable by the autograph inscription of the author.<sup>1</sup> Wood relates

<sup>1</sup> *Ex dono authoris*, on the title-page.



an improbable story of his intended secession to the Roman church, and of some passages interpolated by the vice-chancellor in this sermon, which induced the members of that communion to reject his advances. His intimacy with Fr. à St. Clara, a Franciscan friar, probably occasioned the report. That person, who had sunk his English name in a more euphonious Latin designation, was chaplain to the Queen of Charles I. Wood, who knew him, says he frequently mentioned Taylor's assurances of regret for the severe language of his sermon. It is, of course, possible and very often becoming, to apologise for the tone of our censure, while the subject denounced is regarded with unmitigated aversion. If Taylor dropped such an extenuating remark, an accomplished Jesuit would know how to employ it. We must close our ears to the universal teaching of his works, before we can believe that he had ever turned a favourable eye upon the papal superstition. From the first to the last page of his voluminous productions, his witness against that church is vigorous and uncompromising. "If," he wrote to a Roman Catholic, "I had a mind to lead an evil life, yet hope for heaven at last, I would be of your religion above any in the world."<sup>1</sup> And again, to the same correspondent, "You are not at all safe or warranted for being papists; but we hope well of some of you for having so much of the protestant."<sup>2</sup> And in an earlier

<sup>1</sup> Two Letters to Persons changed in their Religion, 1662, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 159.



period of life he spoke of those who serve the pope in all things, and Jesus Christ in some.<sup>1</sup>

When the rumour was subsequently revived, it drew from him an indignant denial to a friend —“Sir, that party which need such lying stories for the support of their cause, proclaim their cause to be very weak, or themselves to be very evil advocates. Sir, be confident, they dare not tempt me to do so, and it is not the *first* time they have endeavoured to serve their ends by saying such things of me. But, I bless God for it, it is perfectly a slander, and it shall, I hope, for ever prove so.”<sup>2</sup> Even in recent times, a distinguished author<sup>3</sup> has thought himself entitled to express his conviction that, if the Treatise on Repentance contain Taylor’s habitual and final convictions, in some form or other he believed in purgatory. Yet of that doctrine he had written with a decisive abhorrence, and branded it as “giving countenance to a sort of Christians, who live half to God and half to the world;”<sup>4</sup> and as showing them “a way that they may go to hell and to heaven too;” and, with still bitterer sarcasm, “He may come out of purgatory upon reasonable terms, in case he should think fit to go thither.”<sup>5</sup> Surely, he who thus described a doctrine, did not believe in it.

In the May of 1639, two years after his presentation to Uppingham, Taylor married Phœbe Langs-

<sup>1</sup> Preface to Golden Grove.

<sup>2</sup> Works, xi. 211.

<sup>3</sup> Coleridge’s Literary Remains, iii. 321.

<sup>4</sup> Two Letters, &c., 1662, p. 130.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 132.

dale. The ceremony was performed in his own church, upon the 27th of that month. The industry of his biographers has recovered no intelligence concerning the family of his wife. Heber supposes her to have been the daughter of a widow, residing in the parish. Of her father no mention occurs; her brother, a physician, died and was buried at Leeds in 1683. He lived for some time in Gainsborough, as we learn from a letter of Taylor, now preserved among the MSS. of the British Museum. It is in excellent preservation, with some of the seal still adhering to it. The outside bears the superscription, "To my dear brother, Dr. Langsdale, at his Apothecaries House in Gainsborough." The ink is faded, but the writing is of peculiar neatness, recalling the delicate characters of Gray. In Ayscough's catalogue, the date of the letter is 1643, which has been adopted by Heber and Archdeacon Bonney, and is probably correct; but the third figure has been re-touched in different ink, and apparently by a more recent hand, the original number faintly appearing underneath. This is the only familiar letter of Taylor that has reached us:—

"Dear Brother,<sup>1</sup> thy letter was most welcome to me, bringing the happy news of thy recovery. I had notice of thy danger, but watched for this happy relation, and had laid wait with Royston to inquire of Mr. Rumbould. I hope I shall not need

<sup>1</sup> MSS. Donat, 4274, printed by Archdeacon Bonney, p. 16. .

to bid thee be careful for the perfecting thy health and to be fearful of a relapse; though I am very much, yet thou thyself art more concerned in it. But this I will remind thee of, that thou be infinitely (careful?) to perform to God all those holy promises which I suppose thou didst make in thy sickness; and remember what thoughts thou hadst then, and bear them along upon thy spirit all thy lifetime; for that which was true then, is so still; and the world is really as vain a thing as thou didst then suppose it. I durst not tell thy mother of thy danger (though I heard of it) till at the same time I told her of thy recovery. Poor woman! she was troubled and pleas'd at the same time; but your letter did determine her. I take it kindly that thou hast writ to Bowman. If I had been in condition, you should not have been troubled with it; but as it is, thou and I must be content. Thy mother sends her blessing to thee and her little Molly; so do I, and my prayers to God for you both. Your little cozens are your servants, and I am your most affectionate and endeared brother,

“JER. TAYLOR.

“November 24th, 1643.”

If Taylor's letter was written in 1643, the cloud had already darkened his country parsonage. His youngest son died May 28th, 1642, and was soon followed by his mother. Sad days were rapidly approaching. The impeachment and imprisonment of Laud was one of the earliest intimations that he received of the gathering storm. Laud had

been committed to the Tower in the December of 1640. The Humble Remonstrance of Hall gave the first note of the onset in defence of the Bishops and the Liturgy. The following year witnessed the publication of Taylor's *Episcopacy Asserted*. It appeared at Oxford, where he had joined the king. His appeal was enforced by all the aids of legitimate authority, and all the enthusiasm of true patriotism, alarmed for the safety of the throne. Heylin says that it was "backed and encouraged by many petitions to his Majesty, and both Houses of Parliament, not only from the two universities whom it most concerned, but from several counties of the kingdom." Charles rewarded the champion of ecclesiastical government with the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

On the 22nd of August, 1642, the royal standard had been hoisted at Nottingham; and Bonney suggests that Taylor may have joined the army at that period, its route lying at a short distance from Uppingham. The fact of his having been previously appointed one of the king's chaplains, renders the conjecture probable. That he had left his parish before the autumn of 1642, is proved by the absence of any entry by him in the Register, which contains several illustrations of the assiduous care with which he discharged the humblest duties of his ministry. The register of baptisms, during the whole of Taylor's residence, is wanting; his latest signature to burials is at the bottom of the page ending with August, 1641. On the next leaf occurs the following:—"1642. William, the son of

Jer. Taylor, rector, and Phœbe his wife, buried May 28.”<sup>1</sup>

The parliamentary resolution, in the October of the same year, to sequester the livings of the loyal clergy, was soon felt at Uppingham. Upon this interesting portion of Taylor’s history the researches of Heber were unable to throw any light; nor could the friendly inquiries of the Bishop of Peterborough ascertain the date of his deprivation, or the name of his intrusive successor. One of these difficulties may now be removed, upon the evidence of a contemporary writer, from which it will be seen that the reputation and piety of Taylor failed to preserve his house from plunder, or his family from insult and ill-treatment. The following remarkable passage from the “*Mercurius Aulicus*,” for the week ending May 2, 1644, is now reprinted for the first time after an oblivion of two hundred years.<sup>2</sup> The writer, illustrating the character of the puritan preachers, thus continues his history of the week.

“Monday, May 6.—Now, if you would see what heavenly men these lecturers are, be pleased to take notice, that at Uppingham, in Rutlandshire, the Members have placed one Isaac Massey to teach the people, (for the true pastor, Dr. Jeremy Taylor, for

<sup>1</sup> This is stated on the authority of a communication from an inhabitant of Uppingham, to the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, May 31, 1791.

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted for the discovery of this passage to a notice in Mr. Churton’s *Minor Prose Works of Bishop Pearson*, i. 25. Oxford, 1844.

his learning and loyalty is driven thence, his house plundered, his estate seized, and his family driven out of doors.) This Massey, at a Communion this last Easter, having consecrated the bread after his manner, laid one hand upon the Chalice, and smiting his breast with the other, said to the parishioners—*‘As I am a faithful sinner, Neighbours, this is my morning draught;’* and turning himself round to them, said, *‘Neighbours, here’s to ye all!’* and so drank off the whole cupfull, which is none of the least. Many of the parish were hereby scandalized, and therefore departed without receiving the sacrament. Among which, one old man, seeing Massey drink after this manner, said aloud, *‘Sir, much good do it you.’* Whereupon, Massey replied, *‘Thou blessest with thy tongue, and cursest with thy heart; but ’tis no matter, for God will bless whom thou cursest.’* This Massey coming lately into a house of the town, used these words, *‘This town of Uppingham loves Popery, and we would reform it, but they will not,’* (and without any further coherence, said;) *“but I say, whosoever says there is any king in England besides the Parliament at Westminster, I’ll make him for ever speaking more.”* The master of the house replied, *‘I say there is a king in England besides the Parliament in Westminster;’* whereupon Massey, with his cudgel, broke the gentleman’s head. Whoever doubts that Mr. Massey is injured by these relations, may satisfy themselves by inquiring of the inhabitants of Uppingham parish.”



This narration is very painful to read; but our disgust should not induce us to question its truth. The “*Mercurius Aulicus*” was a newspaper issued by the royalist party, and frequently written by Sir John Birkenhead. The present number may have proceeded from his pen. In that case, he probably derived his information from Taylor himself, who knew Birkenhead, often meeting him at Oxford, and other places. One allusion to him occurs in a letter to Evelyn, in reference to the sneer of some Romanists, that the church of England had lost her Head in the martyrdom of Charles. “I remember that when the Jesuits, deriding our calamity, showed this sarcasm to my Lord Lucas, Birkenhead, being present, replied as tartly, ‘It is true, our Church wants a head now; but if you have charity, as you pretend, you can lend us one, for your Church has had two or three heads at a time.’”

The exact date of Taylor’s expulsion is not fixed by the preceding extract. But if the following passage allude to that event—and I know not any other interpretation of which it is susceptible—the pillage of his goods must have taken place before the close of 1642. Addressing Hatton from Oxford in that year, and professing his anxiety to cover himself from danger and calumny, he continues—“And although the cause both is and ought to be defended by kings, yet my person must not go thither to Sanctuary, unless it be to pay my devotion, and I have now no other left for my defence;



I am robbed of that which once did bless me, and, indeed, still does, (but in another manner;) and I hope will do more.”<sup>1</sup> The cause to which he alludes, was the defence of episcopacy.

The successor of Taylor was probably a brother of the Colonel Massey who occupies so prominent a place in the revolutionary memorials of White-lock, and whose sacrilegious exploits in Gloucestershire long preserved his memory in that county. He stripped churches with more than ordinary enthusiasm; selling communion-plate, and tearing up prayer-books; while his soldiers wore the surplices over their arms. Of such a person, the brawler at Uppingham would be the appropriate deputy.

How long he may have been suffered to desecrate that church and parish, we have no means of ascertaining. During the ten years that elapsed after the departure of Taylor, no choice of parochial officers is recorded in the register, and probably no election took place. Under such a pastor, who would serve? At length, April 20, 1652, a churchwarden was appointed by Daniel Swift, styling himself, “Pastor de Uppingham.” An interval of nine years then occurs, without any signature, until John Allington appears as rector, at the Easter of 1661, in which year Taylor was elevated to the Bishopric of Down and Connor. The Parliament had, therefore, never filled up the living, but applying the

<sup>1</sup> Of the Sacred Order and Office of Episcopacy. Oxford, 1642.

income to the necessities of the rebellion, probably assigned a small stipend to the lecturer. Of Taylor's estate, which they also sequestered, we know nothing, but conclude that it formed a portion of his wife's dowry.

The imagination might easily represent to itself the lamentations and blessings that accompanied the parting footsteps of this Good Parson, as he set out upon his journey, in the ruin of all his earthly goods, with the Gospel for his consolation, and Providence for his guide. He would feel, with more than common sensibility, the rude banishment from the fields he had trodden, and the flock he had fed. Perhaps that affecting separation rose to his eye, when, in a later day, he said,<sup>1</sup> "We contract a friendship and relation with those with whom we converse; our very country is dear to us for being in it; and the neighbours of the same village, and those that buy and sell with us, have seized upon some portion of our love."

Rust, however, is incorrect in saying that a storm descended upon Taylor as soon as he had launched into the world. He spent five years in the delightful retirement of a pastoral life. The storm broke on him at last, and all its waves may be said to have gone over his head; until, in the words of his friend, "he and his little fortune were shipwrecked in that great hurricane that overturned both church

<sup>1</sup> Holy Living, ch. iv. sec. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Rust's Funeral Sermon.

and state.”<sup>1</sup> But He, who directs every storm of nature or of man, did not forget his servant. He was cast ashore, to employ the words of the same affectionate panegyrist, “in a private corner of the world, and a tender Providence shrouded him under her wings, and the prophet was fed in the wilderness; and his great worthiness procured him friends, that supplied him with bread and necessaries.”<sup>2</sup> Among the friends to whom Rust alludes, Hatton deserves to be particularly mentioned. Taylor acknowledges many obligations to his instructive conversation, and refers to his devotional feelings with grateful ardour. He cheered the toil of Dugdale, and has received a slight acknowledgment of his reputation from Clarendon. But posterity knows him only by the splendid portraits of the exile from Uppingham.

The footsteps of Taylor during the civil war cannot be tracked with a constant eye. He appears, however, to have shared in some of the perilous marches of his royal master. Wood says that he followed the army in the capacity of chaplain. And this assertion is confirmed by the internal testimony of his works. But I am not aware that any of his biographers or critics have pointed out the vividness and number of his martial images. Keble proves the military experience of Homer from the allusions to arms and combats; and the reader of

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Rust's Funeral Sermon.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Taylor's sermons often finds himself hurried into the tumult of the camp, or the terrors of the conflict, by the same freshness and truth of description. A striking example occurs in his discourse entitled, *Apples of Sodom*,<sup>1</sup> where he represents the sinner overcome by the violence of a strong temptation, and awaking, when the fever subsides, to the full horror and peril of his condition. "But so have I known a bold trooper fight in the confusion of a battle, and, being warm with heat and rage, receive from the sword of his enemy wounds open like a grave; but he felt them not; and when, by the streams of blood, he found himself marked for pain, he refused to consider then what he was to feel to-morrow; but when his rage hath cooled into the temper of a man, and clammy moisture hath checked the fiery emission of spirits, he wonders at his own boldness, and blames his fate, and needs a mighty patience to bear his great calamity." The wounded trooper carries us back to Naseby or Marston-Moor. The following sketch of a humbler hero bears indications of having been painted from life:—

"And what can we complain of the weakness of our strengths, or the pressures of diseases, when we see a poor soldier stand in a breach, almost starved with cold and hunger, and his cold apt to be relieved only by the heats of anger, a fever, or a fired musket, and his hunger slacked by a greater

<sup>1</sup> Works, v. 293.

pain or a huge fear? This man shall stand in his arms and wounds, pale and faint, weary and watchful; and at night shall have a bullet pulled out of his flesh, and shivers from his bones, and endure his mouth to be sewed up from a violent rent to its own dimensions.”<sup>1</sup>

In another place, the man who prays with a discomposed spirit is compared to him “that sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier garrison to be wise in.” Where no particular allusion to military affairs is detected, the language shows the writer’s familiarity with the field and the camp. In the case of a believer who has intermitted the watchfulness of prayer, “the temptation returns and forages, and prevails and seizes upon our unguarded strengths.” These specimens might be enlarged. It is not uninteresting to remember that four of the most eminent of English theologians were brought into scenes of difficulty, that put their nerve as well as their piety to the proof. Pearson was chaplain to the king’s troops at Exeter, under Lord Goring; and Chillingworth acted as engineer at the siege of Gloucester, in 1643, and was only prevented from trying on English fortifications the implements of Roman science, by the sudden advance of the parliamentary army. Barrow was not summoned to the standard of his sovereign; but, much as he admired Horace, there is no reason to think that he would have imitated his flight. Upon one occa-

<sup>1</sup> Holy Dying, ch. iii. sec. 4.

sion, at least, he stood gallantly to his gun, and succeeded in beating off an Algerine privateer, sailing from Italy to Smyrna.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was, perhaps, during his connexion with the army, that Taylor wrote the prayer which is now appended to the third chapter of his *Holy Living*. "Place a guard of angels about the person of the King, and immure him with the defence of thy right hand, that no unhallowed arm may do violence to him. Support him with aids from heaven in all his battles, trials, and dangers, that he may in every instant of his temptation become dearer to thee, and do thou return to him with mercy and deliverance. Give unto him the hearts of all his people, and put into his hand a prevailing rod of iron, a sceptre of power, and a sword of justice; and enable him to defend and comfort the churches under his protection."

## CHAPTER VI.

- I. Uncertainty of the period when Taylor retired from the king's army. — II. Is taken prisoner at the siege of Cardigan Castle. — III. His remarkable allusion to his own history; Heber's interpretation of it examined. — IV. His second marriage; opens a school in Wales; his assistants. V. Literary employment; the Liberty of Prophesying; its aim and tendency.

IT is not possible to determine with accuracy the time of Taylor's final retirement from the royal army. The defeat at Newbury clouded every hope of an early triumph. He is reported to have been a spectator of that melancholy contest, which lasted through a long autumn day—from sunrise until the shadows of night,—and to have subsequently cheered the shattered cavaliers by his eloquent consolations, in the home of learning to which they withdrew. Usher and Hammond had already sought a retreat at Oxford. The death of Falkland, to whom Taylor could not have been unknown, must have filled his heart with sad forebodings; and how deeply he bewailed the sadder funeral that quickly followed, we may read in his own brief but touching allusion. "I shed a tear when I am told that a brave king was misunderstood, then slandered, then imprisoned,



then put to death by evil men; and I never read the story of the Parisian massacre or the Sicilian Vespers,<sup>1</sup> but my blood curdles, and I am disordered by two or three affections." He had, indeed, the satisfaction of visiting the king before the last darkness fell upon him, and is said to have received, "in token of his regard, his watch, and a few pearls and rubies, which had ornamented the ebony case in which he kept his Bible."<sup>2</sup> Long after that farewell, in a letter to Evelyn, he spoke with affectionate reverence of "the dear departed saint."

In the beginning of 1644, we discover Taylor with the royal army in Wales. The information is derived from a passage in Whitelock, to which the attention of Heber was drawn by a MS. note of Bonney. There is considerable obscurity in the allusion, but the circumstances were these: Colonel Gerard, who is mentioned by Clarendon as recovering from severe wounds, to act a great part in the war, besieged the Castle of Cardigan, at that time held for the parliament by Colonel Poole, and procured by stratagem an entry into the town. In the hope of intercepting the supply of provisions, he cut down the bridge, and summoned the castle to surrender, but without success. In the meantime,

<sup>1</sup> Treatise on Friendship. These calamities appear to have made an early and lasting impression on the memory of Taylor; so far back as 1638, he had spoken of "the Sicilian Even-song, and the Matins of S. Bartholomew."—*Sermon on the 5th of November.*

<sup>2</sup> Jones's MS., quoted by Heber, p. 26.

Poole found an opportunity of communicating intelligence of his danger to Major Langhorne, who, speedily arrived to his assistance with a strong detachment, and conveyed a letter into the castle upon an arrow, directing the garrison to make a vigorous sally, while he attacked the besiegers on the other side. The result is thus described by Whitelock: "All which was performed so successfully, that Gerard's forces were all routed, two hundred of them slain upon the place, four brass pieces of ordnance, six hundred arms, and one hundred and fifty prisoners taken, whereof Major Slaughter, divers inferior officers, and Dr. Taylor."<sup>1</sup> Heber erred, therefore, in saying that Taylor is the only prisoner whom Whitelock names; but he certainly speaks of him as a conspicuous one. Nor is there any reasonable cause to doubt his identity. But I cannot coincide with Heber in discovering an allusion to this imprisonment in the dedication of the *Liberty of Prophecy*. The passage possesses a biographical interest;

"In the great storm which dashed the vessel of the church in pieces, I was cast on the coast of Wales; and in a little boat, thought to have enjoyed that rest and quietness which in England I could not hope for. Here I cast anchor; and thinking to ride safely, the storm followed me with so impetuous a violence, that it broke a cable, and I lost my anchor. And here again I was exposed to the

<sup>1</sup> Memorials, p. 130, fol. 1732.

mercy of the sea, and the gentleness of an element that could neither distinguish things nor persons. And but that He who stilleth the raging of the sea, and the noise of his waves, and the madness of his people, had provided a plank for me, I had been lost to all the opportunities of content and study. But I know not whether I have been more preserved by the courtesies of my friends, or the gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy." He then quotes, in the original Greek, the second verse of the 28th chapter of the Acts: "And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness; for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold."

It is easy to discover in this passage an intimation of suffering on his own part, and of generosity on that of others, without recognising the reference to the defeat at Cardigan which Heber traced. For, not to dwell upon the fact that Taylor wrote three or four years after that event, the whole spirit of his grateful recollections refutes the interpretation. The operations of Colonel Gerard were strictly *offensive*. He besieged the castle. Taylor must, therefore, have been with him in a hostile capacity. It would, then, be a singular mode of expression in the lips of a person actively engaged in a military enterprise, to speak of hoping to "enjoy rest and quiet;" of casting anchor, and expecting to "ride safely;" and of being followed and overtaken by the storm, notwithstanding his most anxious efforts to escape it. Such an anticipation might have been

cherished in the seclusion of a Welsh village, but surely not among the besiegers of Cardigan Castle. Heber thinks that the quotation from the Acts of the Apostles implies that Taylor had many fellow-sufferers in the calamity he describes. He transfers, it will be seen, to his own history St. Luke's narrative of the kindness shown by the inhabitants of Melita to the shipwrecked Apostle and them who sailed with him. Heber draws particular attention to *παντας ημας*—the “every one” of our version, as confirming his own view of the passage. But it should be observed, that Taylor seems to have intended, by the metaphor he employed, to give to the shipwreck a personal interest. It was in “a little boat” that the wind drove him out to sea. Nor can I doubt that the “every one” of the sacred historian represented to the mind of Taylor his own family—all those who, embarking with him in the same voyage, and overwhelmed by the same hurricane, had been cherished and preserved by the same benevolence and protection.

His presence at Cardigan in the spring of 1644, and his imprisonment in consequence of the discomfiture of the royalists, may be regarded as established by the narrative of Whitelock. Nor does that conclusion interfere with the probability of his return to Oxford towards the close of the same year in which his Psalter and Defence of the Liturgy issued from the University press, the former bearing the name of Hatton on the title-page, but marked by the indelible impress of

Taylor's pen, and subsequently embodied in his acknowledged works. Of the motive that induced him to substitute the name of his friend in this collection of the Psalms, it would now be idle to seek the solution. It is more pleasing to witness the gratitude of his sorrowful spirit, finding in that Gilead such healing balm for its wounds. "When I came," are his words, "to look upon the Psalter with a nearer observation, and an eye diligent to copy any advantages and remedies there deposited, I found so many admirable promises, so rare variety of the expressions of the mercies of God, so many consolatory hymns, the commemoration of so many deliverances from dangers and deaths and enemies, so many miracles of mercy and salvation, that I began to be so confident as to believe, there would come no affliction great enough to spend so great a stock of comfort, as was laid up in the treasury of the Psalter."<sup>1</sup>

Heber thinks that Taylor was induced to withdraw from active participation in the royal struggles by his marriage with a lady—Joanna Bridges—to whom he had formed an attachment during the king's first visit to Wales; and that, having married her, he "retired to her property soon after the date of his letter to Dr. Langsdale; though the evils of war extending themselves into the most remote and peaceful districts, again, in a very short space of time, involved him in their vortex."<sup>2</sup> He had not

<sup>1</sup> Preface to the Psalter.

<sup>2</sup> Life of Taylor, p. 23.

then written the following passage:—"More reasonable is it that we despise the world, and lay up for heaven, that we heap treasures by giving alms, and make friends of unrighteous Mammon; but at no hand to enter into a state of life, that is all the way adverse to the main interest, and, at the best, an increase to the particular charge."<sup>1</sup> The lady, whose beauty and virtue had won the affection of Taylor, is said to have been a natural daughter of Charles I., and to have presented a strong resemblance to that noble countenance which Vandyck has made immortal. This relationship is claimed on the single authority of the Jones MSS. The date of his second marriage is not known. His youngest daughter was married in 1668.

His wife is supposed to have possessed a considerable property in Llangadock,<sup>2</sup> a small town in the north-eastern part of Carmarthenshire. Its situation is extremely romantic; the church is old and venerable; while the ruins of a castle recal the heroic deeds of the border warfare. Mandiunam, the name of the estate, is about two miles from the town, but within the boundary of the parish. The stream of the Towy flows past it. Upon a neighbouring lawn, a magnificent oak, twenty four feet in circumference, encourages the belief that Taylor might have sometimes sat under its boughs. The mutilated condition of the register of Llangadock, and

<sup>1</sup> Third Sermon on Christ's Advent to Judgment.

<sup>2</sup> Heber writes it Llanguedor.



the circumstances of the Mandinnam property, prevented an inquiring friend of Heber's from discovering any particulars of Joanna Bridges or of her family. It is probable that the income which his marriage afforded him was greatly reduced by the exactions of tyranny and persecution in those troubled times. He would not otherwise have resorted to the toil of keeping a school, in a district of the country not favourable to that occupation. Concerning this season in the life of his friend, Rust supplies no information. He looked upon it, perhaps, as a sordid episode, defacing the splendid tale of his sufferings and genius. The scene of his educational labours was the village of Llanvihangel Aberbythie, in which a church had been built a few years before by Sir John Vaughan, comptroller of the household to Charles I. He did not undertake the task without companions. His assistants were William Nicholson and William Wyatt, of whom the first became Bishop of Gloucester, and the second, a Prebendary of Lincoln. Nicholson had been deprived of one of the most agreeable livings in South Wales, by the Parliament, about the period of Taylor's capture at Cardigan. Bishop Bull, who wrote his epitaph, describes him to have been a person of singular excellence, writing things to be read, and doing things to be written.

There is a traditional story in the village of Llanvihangel, that Taylor instructed his pupils in



any cottage that could be hired for that purpose.<sup>1</sup> Wyatt, however, addressed his Latin letter to Lord Hatton from a fixed abode, which he styled Newton Hall; and the impression of Wood was evidently favourable to a more dignified view of the academy. Two of the pupils have recorded upon their tombs the names of their teacher. The Grammar, which appeared in 1647, though professing to be a combined effort, has been ascribed to the pen of Wyatt.<sup>2</sup> But it probably underwent the revision of Taylor, by whom it was affectionately recommended to the eldest son of Lord Hatton, then fifteen years old, and with reference to whose studies it may have been chiefly compiled. "It is yet," writes Taylor, "but early day with you, *Adhuc tua messis in herba*; but if we may conjecture by the most hopeful prognostics of a clear morning, we, who are servants and relatives of my Lord your father, promise to ourselves the best concerning you. These sadnesses, which cloud many good men at this present, have taught us all that nothing can secure a happiness or create one, but those inward excellences, which, like diamonds in the night, sparkle in despite of darkness." After reminding him of the necessity of imitating the example of his father, he continues—"In order to which, give me leave to help you in laying this first stone, which is but small, and yet according to the strictest rules of

<sup>1</sup> Bonney, 51.<sup>2</sup> Wood.

art, but with a design greatly complying with your end; for it is contrived with no small brevity, that since you are intended for a long journey, to a great progress of wisdom and knowledge, you may not be stopped at your setting out, but proceed like the sun, whose swiftness is just proportionable to the length of his course."

In the same year in which the Grammar was published, Taylor produced his *Liberty of Prophecy*, written, as he informed Lord Hatton, in poverty and tribulation, without books or leisure to consult them. This was the work that Coleridge read with the highest admiration and the liveliest apprehension. He saw in it all the confluent powers of the author, swelling the majestic stream of genius, as it rolled onward in its diversified and winding course. The avowed object of the treatise was to plead the cause of the persecuted church of England. Hallam rejects this interpretation. He denies that the reader can perceive in it the slightest bearing on any toleration, that the Episcopal church might then ask of her victorious enemies. He believes Taylor to have had another class of controversies in his eye. Hallam may, perhaps, refer to a remark of Wood, who tells us that Taylor employed a stratagem to break the compact force of the Presbyterian power, by sowing seeds of division among the various sectaries; that with this view he lay "in ambuscado." That he wrote, also, with an indirect reference to the leaders of his own party, is not improbable. Heber

has ingeniously shown, that the circumstances of the time encouraged a hope of a peaceful adjustment of political differences. The king was in the keeping of Cromwell, and the use of the Prayer Book was permitted; the army had assumed an attitude of hostility towards the Parliament; and the Independents were assailing the Presbyterians with virulence equal to their own. The early stages of seditious intemperance had not yet been inflamed into frenzy. Hall was only just driven from Norwich. It is quite in harmony with the disposition of Taylor to suppose, that he may have been desirous to impress upon the monarch and his advisers among the high church party, the paramount importance of meeting the demands of the Presbyterians in a conciliatory and liberal temper. Of the book itself, I shall have another opportunity of speaking. Its plan is extremely simple. Considering the Apostles' Creed to contain the elements of Christian truth, he regards every subsidiary doctrine as indifferent and dispensable. From this principle the argument spreads on every side into that luxuriant amplitude of learning and illustration, which, while it beautifies, so often overshades the vigour and massiveness of his teaching.

## CHAPTER VII.

- I. Lord Carbery protects Taylor; Golden Grove.—II. Beauty of the scenery; its influence on his writings. — III. Holy Living and Dying. — IV. The Great Exemplar; its devotional spirit. — V. His Sermons. — VI. Funeral Discourse on Lady Carbery; her character. — VII. Remark of Keble upon Taylor; compared with Burke. — VIII. The rhetorical and poetical mind contrasted.

GOD, was the beautiful and characteristic saying of Taylor, places a watery cloud in the eye, that when the light of heaven shines on it, it may produce a rainbow to be a sacrament and a memorial, that God and the sons of men do not love to see a man perish. His own history was a prolonged illustration of the image. In all the sorrows and wearinesses of his dark journey, he was cheered by friends who seemed to be raised up to bless the persecuted pilgrim of the Cross. He had the courage as well as the patience of a hero. "When the north wind blows, and it rains sadly, none but fools sit down in it and cry; wise people defend themselves against it with a warm garment, a good fire, and a dry roof."<sup>1</sup> Through every storm

<sup>1</sup> Holy Living, ch. ii. sec. 6.

of difficulty and oppression he worked his way, climbing among the hills till a path opened before him, or some glimmering window guided him into hospitality and a shelter. Such a light streamed over his footsteps from the cheerful friendliness of Golden Grove, the seat of Lord Carbery, and situated in the same village in which his necessities had reduced his aspiring intellect to the drudgery of tuition. Among the

“Southern tracts of Cambria, deep embayed,  
With green hills fenced, and ocean’s murmurs lulled,”<sup>1</sup>

it was singularly happy in its combination of woody and pastoral fertility and repose. The Towy flowed through the grounds. Bonney gives a pleasing description of the place. Embracing the rich sweep of the valley from Carmarthen to Llandovery, Gronger Hill, about a mile and a half to the north-west, is a prominent feature in the landscape. The whole scene lives in the panorama of Dyer, with its streams, trees, and ruined castles. Of these, Dynevor, once the residence of the Welsh Princes, and Dryslwyn are visible from the windows of the present mansion. Dyer has not forgotten to notice the exquisite variety of foliage for which the vale of Towy is remarkable.

“Below the trees unnumbered rise,  
Beautiful in various dyes,  
The gloomy pine, the poplar blue,  
The yellow beech, the sable yew ;

<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth.

The slender fir that taper grows,  
The sturdy oak with broad spread boughs."

Dynevor Castle is shaded by oaks of extreme antiquity. The union of pastoral and baronial life composes a lovely picture. Taylor would not contemplate such a landscape without delight and gratitude. We possess, in his noblest book, an affecting transcript of his feelings:—"I am fallen into the hands of publicans and sequestrators, and they have taken all from me; what now? Let me look about me. They have left me the sun and moon, fire and water, a loving wife, and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me; and I can still discourse, and unless I list, they have not taken away my merry countenance, and my cheerful spirit, and a good conscience; they have still left me the providence of God, and all the promises of the Gospel, and my religion, and my hopes of heaven, and my charity to them too; and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and meditate. I can walk in my neighbour's pleasant fields, and see the variety of natural beauties, and delight in all that in which God delights—that is, in virtue and wisdom, in the whole creation, and in God himself. And he that hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who loses all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down upon his little handful of thorns. Such a person were fit to bear Nero company in his funeral sorrow for the loss of one of Poppea's hairs, or help to mourn for Lesbia's sparrow: and because he loves

it, he deserves to starve in the midst of plenty, and to want comfort while he is encircled with blessings.”<sup>1</sup> “Let everything you see,” he wrote at the same season, “represent to your spirit the excellency and the power of God, and let your conversation with the creatures lead you unto the Creator; and so shall your actions be done more frequently with an eye to God’s presence, by your often seeing him in the glass of the creation. In the face of the sun you may see God’s beauty; in the fire you may feel his heat warming; in the water his gentleness to refresh you; it is the dew of heaven that makes your field give you bread.”<sup>2</sup>

He followed the exhortation he gave. His writings at Golden Grove contain lovelier and more numerous specimens of rural description and picturesque embellishment, than could be gathered from his collective works. A beautiful example occurs in his argument to show how sickness is sanctified by the grace of God:—

“For so have I known the boisterous north wind pass through the yielding air, which opened its bosom, and appeased its violence, by entertaining it with easy compliance in all the regions of its reception. But when the same breath of heaven hath been checked with the stiffness of a tower, or the united strength of a wood, it grew mighty, and dwelt there, and made the *highest branches stoop*,

<sup>1</sup> Holy Living, ch. ii. sec. 6. Of Contentedness.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ch. i. sec. 3.



and *make a smooth path for it on the top of all its glories.*"<sup>1</sup>

Pope's description of the trees round a monastery, "waving high," has always been esteemed for its vividness and truth; but it yields, in grandeur and force of painting, to this image of a mighty wood bending its multitude of boughs beneath the hurricane. Touches of a lighter pencil also abound. The petulant solicitations of the passions "in health, are always restless and, as atoms in the sun, always dancing, and always busy."<sup>2</sup>

Milton might have enriched a new *Penseroso* with the comparison of the soul's progress in moral and intellectual glory, to the course of the sun, from its dawn to fulness. "But as when the sun, approaching towards the gates of the morning, first opens a little eye of heaven, and sends away the spirits of darkness, and gives light to a cock, and calls up the lark to matins, and by and by gilds the fringes of a cloud, and peeps over the eastern hills, thrusting out his golden horns, like those which decked the brows of Moses, when he was forced to wear a veil, because himself had seen the face of God; and still, while a man tells the story, the sun gets up higher, till he shows a fair face and a full light, and then he shines one whole day, under a cloud often, sometimes weeping great and little showers, and sets quickly; so is a man's reason and his life." Taylor may have beheld this spectacle over the romantic

<sup>1</sup> Holy Dying, ch. iii. sec. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

hills that shelter Golden Grove on the north-east. The concluding circumstance shows the picture to have been composed in a fertile, yet hilly country, like South Wales; this sudden darkening of the sun with rain and tempest being the distinguishing peculiarity of mountainous regions. The change from splendour and joyfulness to vapours and melancholy, is often so wonderful as to resemble the effect of enchantment. The wind rises, mists roll up swiftly from the valleys, thunder roars along the ravines, the summits recede in smoke, and all the many-coloured landscape disappears, to return, after an interval, with heightened splendour. The light and festive Gay was the earliest English writer who pointed out the charm of this description. If compared with a sunrise by Bishop Hall, its brilliancy of colour will be perceived.<sup>1</sup>

Taylor, like Claude, seems to have felt that by taking nature as he found it, he seldom produced beauty. Reynolds<sup>2</sup> describes the pictures of that painter as compositions of the various draughts, which he had previously made from scattered scenes and prospects of unusual loveliness. The preacher

<sup>1</sup> "God is the God of order, not of confusion. As, therefore, in natural things, he useth to proceed from one extreme to another through the mean, so doth he in spiritual. The sun riseth not all at once to his highest, from the darkness of midnight; but first sends forth some feeble glimmerings of light in the dawning; then looks out with weak and waterish beams; and so by degrees ascends to the midst of heaven."—*Meditations and Vows*, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Fourth Discourse.

resembled the artist. And as the most magnificent landscapes have been given to us by historical painters—Titian, Caracci, N. Poussin,—so we are indebted for some of the brightest landscapes in words to the grave instructors in theology and virtue.

The same happy selection of rural images accompanies him into the severer paths of argument; he warns those who seek in a speculative faith an independent element of salvation, “that they eat shadows; and when they are drowning, catch at the images of the trees which hang over the water and are reflected from the bottom.”<sup>1</sup> The illustration of the Christian’s devotion by the wavering ascent of the lark, could only have proceeded from one who went out to meditate in the fields, in the morning hours and at eventide. “For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of its wings, till the little creature sat down to pant and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learned music from an angel, as he passed sometimes

<sup>1</sup> On Lukewarmness in Zeal, pt. ii.

through the air about his ministering here below.  
So is the prayer of a good man."<sup>1</sup>

And here is a woodland scene moralized with all  
the serious wisdom of a poet or a painter—

“ Whom, what he finds  
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flow'r,  
Or what he views of beautiful or grand  
In nature, from the broad majestic oak  
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,  
Prompts with remembrance of a present God.”

He is speaking of the influence of ancestral virtues or vices: “ And as the root of a tree receives nourishment not only sufficient to preserve its own life, but to transmit a plastic juice to the utmost branch and smallest germ that knots in the most distant part; so the great and exemplary piety of the father of a family not only preserves to his own soul the life of grace and hopes of glory, but shall be a quickening spirit, active and communicative of blessing, not only to the trunk of the tree, the body and rightly descending line, but even to the colla-

<sup>1</sup> Second Sermon on the Return of Prayers. The lark had been already introduced into a sermon by a writer who died before Taylor. This was Henry Smith, the silver-tongued preacher, as his contemporaries called him. But mark the difference. If Taylor had ever cast his eye on the passage, it was only to change it into his own costly metal, as Virgil did the coarser ore of Ennius. “ Like a lark that falls to the ground sooner than she mounted up; at first she retires, as it were, by steps, but when she cometh nearer the ground, she falls down with a jump; so we decline at first, and waver lower and lower, till we be almost at the worst, and then we run headlong, as though we were sent post to hell.”—*A Caveat for Christians*, p. 427. Sermons. Edit. 1675.

teral branches, to the most distant relatives, and all that claim a kindred shall have a title to a blessing.”<sup>1</sup>

Everywhere we discover the observer of nature. The voice of an expiring man “is like the faint echo of a distant valley.”<sup>2</sup> The love of the Divine Architect has “scattered the firmament with stars, as a man sows corn in his fields.”<sup>3</sup> The slightest rural circumstances are recorded; whether it be “the little bee that feeds on dew or manna, and lives upon what falls every morning from the storehouses of heaven, clouds and Providence;” or “the fountain that swells over the green turf.”<sup>4</sup> He finds in the ivy round the tree an illustration of the connexion between the church and state: “For so doth the humble ivy creep at the foot of the oak, and leans upon its lowest base, and begs shade and protection, and leave to grow under its branches, and to give and take mutual refreshment, and pay a friendly influence for a mighty patronage; and they grow and dwell together, and are the most remarkable of friends and married pairs of all the leafy nation.”<sup>5</sup> And perhaps the children of Lord Carbery, idly rocking upon the Towy, may have suggested to him the description of a Christian faith, not to be

<sup>1</sup> The Entail of Curses cut off, pt. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Holy Dying, ch. ii. sec. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. ch. ii. sec. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. ch. ii. sec. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Discourses of Christian Prudence. Taylor would not have been displeased with Cowley’s College of Philosophy, its fair cloister, its studious dwellings, with “little gardens behind them, just after the manner of the Chartreux beyond sea;” the smooth walks, the embowering trees, and in the middle, a “parterre of flowers and a fountain.”

agitated by any circumstances of fear: "And so have I often seen young and unskilful persons sitting in a little boat, when every little wave sporting about the sides of the vessel, and every motion and dancing of the barge seemed a danger, and made them cling fast upon their fellows; and yet all the while they were as safe as if they sat under a tree, while a gentle wind shook the leaves into a refreshment and a cooling shade."

In the edition of Taylor's *Polemical Discourses*, published in 1657, there is a sketch of Golden Grove, with its enclosure of dark woods and hilly background. The ancient residence having been destroyed by fire in 1729, was replaced by a modern building, that offers no reminiscence of its predecessor. Some of the old walls are said to remain; and the portraits of the first and second Lady Carbery are fortunately preserved, to remind the spectator of the poetry and eloquence with which they are indissolubly connected. It is pleasing to know that when Archdeacon Bonney wrote his memoir, thirty years ago, the name of Taylor was still mentioned in the neighbourhood with veneration, and that an avenue of trees near the house retains the name of Taylor's Walk. These slight circumstances in the history of piety and genius possess a lasting interest. Ridley's path of meditation is pointed out in the orchard of Pembroke; Addison even now glides along the banks of the Cherwell, under those favourite elms, where

"The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard  
Beneath th' umbrageous multitude of leaves;"



and the visitor to All Souls' looks from the window of Young's chamber upon the broad fig-tree, to which the air of that college seems to be so propitious.

The days spent in the neighbourhood of Golden Grove were among the happiest in the life of Taylor. He was surrounded by affectionate friends who loved and honoured him; the griping fangs of penury were loosened. Rich houses or jewels, Tyrian silks and Persian carpets, he neither possessed nor coveted.<sup>1</sup> But he had entered into the temporal promise of his Lord. Numberless are the passages, written about this period, in which his hopeful gratitude breaks into praises of God's providence, and exhortations to believe that He, who feeds the young ravens when they call upon him, will also nourish every poor and trusting disciple. His eloquence has all the touching authority of experience. "We have lived at God's charges all the days of our life, and have (as the Italian proverb says) sat down to meat at the sound of a bell; and hitherto he hath not failed us; we have no reason to suspect him for the future; we do not use to serve men so: and less time of trial creates great confidences in us towards them who for twenty years together never broke their word with us; and God hath so ordered it, that a man shall have had the experience of many years' provision, before he shall understand how to doubt; that he may be pro-

<sup>1</sup> Holy Living, ch. ii.



vided for with an answer against the temptation shall come, and the mercies felt in his childhood may make him fearless when he is a man.”<sup>1</sup>

He never grows weary of recording the noble usages and great endearments bestowed on him by his generous patron, and his amiable wife. To his interest he owed his tranquillity; to his bounty, much of his support; and to his favour, many of the collateral blessings that took the sharp edge from adversity.<sup>2</sup> He might well rejoice to honour the friend who had sheltered him in the tempest that beat so heavily on his scattered brethren in loyalty and affliction. The family of Clarendon were almost starving at Antwerp, while he himself was scarcely able to hold a pen, and had not “three sous” in the world to buy a fagot, to warm his shivering and ill-clothed body.<sup>3</sup>

It was at Golden Grove that the genius of Taylor expanded into its full beauty and flower; under that fostering shade, he composed his *Holy Living and Dying*, a divine pastoral, in which the solemnities of piety and wisdom, like the painter’s tomb in Arcadia, breathe a tenderer seriousness over all the scenery of fancy, of eloquence, and of learning.

<sup>1</sup> *Holy Living*, ch. ii. sect. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Epistle dedicatory, prefixed to *Holy Living*. The piety of Lord Carbery is indirectly commended in the sermon on his wife’s death: “She would delight to say that he called her to her devotions, he encouraged her good inclinations, he directed her piety, he invited her with good books.”

<sup>3</sup> According to one of his own letters, 1653.

His Great Exemplar, belonging to the same period of his intellectual life, bears similar marks of the fruitful soil from which it sprang. Weary, to adopt his own image, with rowing up and down the seas of questions, he steered his course into the serener waters and stiller air of holier and more delightful studies. He turns aside from controversy, to that part of theology which is wholly practical; that which makes us wiser, because it makes us better.<sup>1</sup> In the Great Exemplar, as in all his works, he seeks to attract and please his readers. Earnest to advance, by all means, the necessity, and to explain the duties of a holy life, he endeavours to allure some by mingling what is profitable with what is agreeable; and "others by such parts as will better entertain their spirits than a romance."<sup>2</sup> In the hope and desire of being useful, he abstained from embellishing the argument with his usual profusion of figures and tracery.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps his pencil never manifested so sweet and retiring a chastity of colour, as in this delineation of Christian life. Rubens, for a season, is lost in Raffaele.

In the same pastoral village, he composed and preached some of those wonderful discourses which have raised him to the side of the greatest masters of sacred eloquence. Heber advances a very ingenious theory to account for their lofty style of argument and rhetoric. He thinks that "in preparing

<sup>1</sup> Dedication of the Great Exemplar to Lord Hatton of Kirby.

<sup>2</sup> Preface, near the conclusion.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

his sermons for the press, he materially changed them from the compositions which he had delivered to his rustic auditory in South Wales, or that they had really been, in the first instance, designed for the university pulpit, and that, when preaching them at Golden Grove, he had recourse to such extemporaneous omissions or alterations as suited the circumstances and abilities of his congregation.”<sup>1</sup> This hypothesis, however much the admirers of plain sermons may rejoice to welcome it, is amply refuted by Taylor himself, in his prefatory letter<sup>2</sup> to Lord Carbery. He sets out by declaring that the publication, instead of promoting his reputation, was only calculated to rebuke any sentiment of vanity. “Sermons may please when they first strike the ear, and yet appear flat and ignorant when they are offered to an eye and an understanding that can consider at leisure.” He emphatically asserts that he “now parts with the advantage which they had in the delivery.” Indeed, if proof were needed to show his own confidence in the practicalness of his pulpit teaching, it would be furnished by his manner of deprecating all curious search “after the learning of a sermon, or its deliciousness to the ear or fancy;” or more unanswerably still, by his admirable censure of the sermon-hunters of his time, hanging on the skirts of every new pretender to originality. “Some persons have an insatiable appetite in hearing, and hear only that

<sup>1</sup> Life of Taylor, 172.

<sup>2</sup> Prefixed to Twenty-seven Sermons.

they may talk and make a party; they enter into their neighbour's house to kindle their candle, and espying there a glaring fire, sit down upon the hearth and warm themselves all day, and forget their errand; and in the mean time their own fires are not lighted, nor their families instructed or provided for, nor any need served, but a lazy pleasure, which is useless and impudent."

But is it certain that Taylor's congregation consisted of rustics? I think not. The household and retainers of Lord Carbery must have contributed a considerable number of hearers. And they would be swelled from another source. The fierce incursions of the rebels into the western counties, continually drove bands of loyalists to seek a refuge among the mountainous valleys of South Wales. To their appeal the gates of Golden Grove would be always open. The king's adherents comprised the educated classes of the country. Nor had the horrors of civil war benumbed the taste for literary or sylvan pleasures. Charles loved to chase down the sun in the verdant glades of Woodstock, or to turn over the pages of splendid Virgils in college libraries. Shakspeare and Ariosto were the companions of his tent; and his saddest hours borrowed a light from the charms of Ariel, or the loves of Angelica. His followers would imitate his example.

Nor was Taylor likely to be ignorant of the character of those gay and accomplished gentlemen, whom the troubles of the time often sent, as I believe, to mingle with the humbler worshippers

in the church of Llanvihangel Aberbythic, or the chapel of Golden Grove. Viewed under that aspect, his manner of preaching was adapted to the place and the season. We can, then, comprehend the beautiful propriety of those appeals to the noblest emotions of the soul, and those thrilling summonses to bravery, to purity, and to faith. Who shall say that no generous, but indolent, cavalier felt his heart burn within him, as that successor of the Apostles testified by the Scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ, and reasoned of temperance, and judgment to come. I can think that from the lonely church-door, in that sequestered valley, many youthful spirits returned with a holier devotion, to suffer or to die for their country and their religion. Some of the lustre of mature years may have been kindled by the fire of Taylor's lip. It is observed, by Clarendon, of Lord Northampton, who fell on Hopton Heath, that he was not well known till his evening; and that, as the tumult of those distractions gathered upon his ear, he seemed as if he had been awakened out of a lethargy. The voice of Taylor may have been a mighty instrument in rousing gallant minds from a deadlier slumber, and illuminating their evening with a brighter radiance.

But even for the simplest member of his flock, there was in every sermon something to interest the curiosity, to comfort the sorrow, and to build up the faith. He adopted, in the teaching of the pulpit, a system which is now deemed, for the most part, unworthy of pastoral industry or imitation. He

endeavoured to obtain the attention of his auditors by enlisting their sympathies, and exciting their wonder. He knew that men are certainly deaf, when they are yawning.

If his discourses be inspected, they will be found to be singularly rich in all that engaging vivacity, which, in a different shape, made Montaigne the most agreeable of essayists, and Livy, the most fascinating of historians. Sometimes he has a tale of a Persian king secluding himself in his magnificent metropolis during the winter, and returning to his palace at Susa in the summer, encircled by the servants of a hundred and twenty provinces, and glittering amidst all the princes of Asia. Does he seek to impress upon his hearers the incapacity of power in the present life to mould the future? He borrows the glass of the Greek satirist, and exhibits kings and warriors in Hades, selling salt fish, and crying mussels; or startles their ears with Philip of Macedon, hammering shoes in a miserable stall. Is the selfishness of man the object of his invective? He travels back to a Roman festival, and shows that while their religious offerings consisted of a little wine, and a handful of gum, "when they feasted themselves, they had many vessels filled with Campanian wine, turtles of Liguria, Sicilian beeves, wheat from Egypt, wild boars from Illyrium, and Grecian sheep."<sup>1</sup> When he proclaims the omniscience of

<sup>1</sup> Sermon XV. House of Feasting, pt. 1.



God, the breasts of men are transparent to his gaze, and their thoughts are visible as the Chian wines in the purest crystal.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes he sends his moral home upon an arrow out of the quiver of the epigrammatist; thus, he tells those who hurry into the tumult of business, in the hope of escaping from the inconvenience of solitude:—"The stags in the Greek epigram, whose knees were clogged with frozen snow upon the mountains, came down to the brooks of the vallies, hoping to thaw their joints with the waters of the stream, but there the frost overtook them and bound them fast in ice, till the young herdsmen took them in their snare."<sup>2</sup> The government of the tongue is enforced by the example of a Roman gentleman, who "was a good man and full of sweetness and justice and nobleness, but he would read his nonsense verses to all companies,—at the public games and in private feasts, in the baths and in the beds, in public and in private, to sleeping or to waking people. Every one was afraid of him, and though he was good, yet he was not to be endured."<sup>3</sup> The transformation of the natural into the spiritual man is one of the most wonderful achievements of Divine grace; and this is the illustration that Taylor gives of it—"St. Jerome tells us of the custom of the empire; when a tyrant was overcome, they used to break the head of his statue, and upon the same trunk to set the head of

<sup>1</sup> Apples of Sodom, v. 317.

<sup>2</sup> Sermon XVII., The Marriage Ring.

<sup>3</sup> Sermon XXII., Good and Evil Tongue.



the conqueror, and so it passed wholly for the new prince. So it is in the kingdom of Grace. Sin is overcome, and a new heart is put into us, so that we serve under a new head, instantly we have a new name given us, and we are esteemed a new creation.”<sup>1</sup>

On the 9th of October, 1650, Taylor was deprived by death of his accomplished and gentle friend, the Countess of Carbery, who was buried in the village church of Llanvihangel Aberbythic, where he preached her funeral sermon. He presented in it her picture, “drawn in little, and in water colours, but with a faithful hand, and taken from the life.”<sup>2</sup> He was, doubtless, as sincere in his admiration, as in his sorrow; for he could not but remember that in the same church, at no remote period, he had indignantly denounced the bribed flatterers who canonise departed patrons in funeral panegyrics.<sup>3</sup> His character of Lady Carbery reminds us of the mild sanctity of a saint, by Guido. The features are passionless, and even their beauty is sanctified into devotion. “I have seen,” he says, “a female religion that wholly dwelt upon the face and tongue; that like a wanton and undressed tree, spends all its juices in suckers and irregular branches, in leaves and gum, and after all such goodly outsides, you should never eat an apple, or be delighted with the beauties or the perfumes of a hopeful blossom. But the religion of this excellent lady

<sup>1</sup> Of the Spirit of Grace. pt. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Dedication to Lord Carbery.

<sup>3</sup> Sermon on Invalidity of Death-bed Repentance.

was of another constitution; it took root downward in humility, and brought forth fruits upward in the substantial graces of a Christian, in charity and justice, in chastity and modesty, in fair friendships and sweetness of society; she had not very much of the forms and outsides of godliness, but she was largely careful for the power of it, for the moral, essential, and useful parts; such which would make her to be, not seem to be, religious."

Keble,<sup>1</sup> to illustrate his distinction between the rhetorical and poetical mind, brings forward two specimens from Burke and Taylor; the former, occurring in the Essay on the French Revolution, the latter, in this Sermon on Lady Carbery.

## BURKE.

It is now sixteen, or seventeen years, since I saw the Queen of France at Versailles; and surely, never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in, glittering like the morning-star, full of life, and splendour, and joy. Ah, what a revolution! and what a heart must I have, to contemplate, without emotion, that elevation and that fall!

## TAYLOR.

In all her religion, and in all her actions of relation towards God, she had a strange evenness and untroubled passage, sliding towards her ocean of God and of infinity, with a certain and silent motion.

<sup>1</sup> Prælectiones Academicæ Oxonii habitæ, Annis M.DCCC.XXXII. &c. See particularly the third Lecture.

Keble awards the crown of the orator to Burke, and of the poet to Taylor. "Who will deny," he says, "that these words of the bishop flow from a full heart? Who will doubt that he would have uttered the same sentiment in the silence and solitude of his own chamber?" The picture of Burke is vivid and striking; it dazzles and charms the eye; but the strain of Taylor leaves an impression on the mind and the ear. We hear the tide of life flowing into eternity. We might, perhaps, distinguish the rhetorical from the poetical temperament, by calling the first *descriptive*, and the second *suggestive*. In Burke, the picture is under our eye; in Taylor, we feel that some brighter apparition is behind the horizon. One describes, the other suggests.

## CHAPTER VIII.

- I. The publication of "Golden Grove" occasions his imprisonment; beginning of his acquaintance with Evelyn; is imprisoned a second time.—II. Appearance of the Treatise on Repentance; the controversy it produced.—III. Taylor visits London, and dines at Says Court; Boyle and Wilkins; interesting letter to Evelyn.—IV. Returns to Wales; death of one of his children; his own sources of consolation.—V. Receives Evelyn's translation of Lucretius, and regrets the neglect of sacred poetry.—VI. Affecting allusion to his family.

FEW of Taylor's devotional writings are imbued with a sweeter vein of piety, than that collection of prayers to which he gave the appropriate name of Golden Grove. But in his glowing panegyric of the church—her "sacraments so adorned and administered," and her "circumstances of religion so useful and apt for edification,"—he deviated into an indignant attack upon the Puritan preachers. Honesty and prudence are seldom united. His remarks excited the displeasure of the dominant party; and the association of the book with Lord Carbery might also have irritated Cromwell, who, upon one occasion, suddenly invested Golden Grove with a troop of horse, in the expectation of capturing the Earl, who succeeded, however, in escap-

ing to a farm-house among the hills. The publication led to Taylor's imprisonment, as we learn from a letter of Evelyn, Feb. 9, 1654, in which he expressed his admiration of the sufferer, and of that true valour which dares to be undone.

It would be interesting to trace to its commencement the intimacy of these eminent persons; it probably began about this period. The style of Evelyn's first letter does not betoken a familiar acquaintance; but in some hearts affectionate feelings soon grow. On the 15th of April, we find him going to London to "hear the famous Dr. Jeremy Taylor at St. Greg, on 6 Matt. 48, concerning evangelical perfection." And in the following year, March 18th, an entry in his diary shows that he had already availed himself of so precious an opportunity of receiving spiritual instruction:—"Went to London on purpose to hear that excellent preacher, Dr. Jeremy Taylor, on 14 Matt. 17, showing what were the conditions of obtaining eternal life; also concerning abatements for unavoidable infirmities, how cast on the account of the cross. On the 31st, I made a visit to Dr. Jeremy Taylor, to confer with him about some spiritual matters, using him thenceforward as my ghostly father.<sup>1</sup> I beseech God Almighty to make me ever mindful and thankful for his heavenly assistances."

<sup>1</sup> The eye of Evelyn might have been drawn to several passages in the *Holy Living and Dying*:—"Use the advice of some spiritual, or other prudent man, for the choice of such spiritual books which may be of use and benefit for the edifi-

Taylor must have seen, in the attachment and generosity of Evelyn, a fulfilment of his own assurance to the afflicted Christian, that God will provide for his people, and lay up corn to feed him in the granary of his brother. Heber conjectures, from another letter of Evelyn, the date of which he proposes to alter from March to May, 1655, that Taylor was soon involved in a second calamity. He discovers an intimation that the person to whom it was addressed was again in prison. But the letter seems to admit, and even to require, a different interpretation, since it evidently refers to a happy escape from some severe persecution, when the "stars of the bright hemisphere were falling from their orbs." "I speak," he writes to Taylor, "concerning secular, yet religious persons, whose glory it will only be to be buried in your ruins." It should be remembered that Cromwell's animosity against the episcopal clergy had in this year broken out with extreme virulence; they were prohibited, by severe penalties, from teaching the young, or consoling the old. The church and school were closed. The little church of St. Gregory by St. Paul's was the only one in which the liturgy was suffered to be read.<sup>1</sup> Even that gate of praise,

cation of thy spirit, in the ways of holy living."—*Holy Living*, chap. iv. sec. 4. And again—"Whether they be many or few that are sent to the sick person, let the curate of the parish, or his own confessor, be amongst them."—*Holy Dying*, chap. v. sec. 2.

<sup>1</sup> Evelyn's Diary, April 15, 1655.



it was feared, would not long remain open. "The daily sacrifice," writes Evelyn, is ceasing, and all the exercise of your functions is made criminal, and the light of Israel is quenched." And in another part of the same letter he asks—"Where shall we now receive the Viaticum with safety? How shall we be baptised?" These expressions explain the meaning of the writer. The episcopal power overthrown; the church plundered; her sacraments suspended; all the golden links of her pastoral economy rent asunder,—surely these were the ruins present to the eye of Evelyn, and under which religious persons would rejoice to be buried.

"We are now," he said, "to take our last farewell (as they threaten) of God's service in this city, and everywhere else in public;" concluding his sorrowful complaint in a strain of Christian resignation, not less honourable to his teacher than to himself. "For my part, I have learned from your excellent assistances to humble myself, and to adore the inscrutable paths of the Most High. God and truth are still the same, though the foundations of the world be shaken." Perhaps, even at that moment, the voice of Taylor was pouring into his ear the inspiring consolation—"We are reduced to that religion which no man can forbid—which we can keep in the midst of a persecution—by which the martyrs in the days of our fathers went to heaven—that by which we can be servants of God, and receive the spirit of Christ, and make use of his com-



forts, and live in his love, and in charity with all men, and they that do so cannot perish.”<sup>1</sup>

That he underwent a second imprisonment, whatever may have been its origin, cannot be doubted, and Chepstow Castle was probably the place of his confinement. Heber thinks that it was neither long nor severe; of its duration we have no intelligence, but that it was, in the beginning, at least, attended by considerable hardships, the words of Taylor himself seem to assure us :—“ I now have that liberty that I can receive any letters, and send any, for the gentlemen under whose custody I am, as they are careful of their charges, so they are civil to my person.” Every alleviation implies a previous restriction.

One of the most ingenious of his contemporaries remarked that a warlike, various, and tragical age is best to write of, and worst to write in. But Taylor found his hermitage in a camp, and the cloistral shade in a prison. In this year he added twenty-five discourses to his previous collection, and produced his *Treatise on the Doctrine and Practice of Repentance*, which, more than any other of his numerous works, contributed to embitter his future hours by controversies and remonstrance. Calvinism was up in arms against his doctrine of original sin, and catholic minds felt the shock which it gave to the articles and liturgy of the church. The admirable Sanderson complained,

<sup>1</sup> Works, ix. 365.

even with tears, that the interpretation of Taylor removed the ancient landmarks of faith; and Warner, Bishop of Rochester, a moderate and learned man, joined in the disapproval. The peculiarity of his views has been traced to his dislike of Augustine's. The impulse that turned him aside from one error, probably swung him into another. Among his friends, Evelyn alone appears to have approved of his argument, which, he assures him, he had "perused to his very great satisfaction and direction."

Of his declared opponents, the most able was Jeanes, a presbyterian minister, who had been his contemporary at Oxford, and had carried over to the Puritans considerable supplies of erudition and honesty, of which they stood so largely in need. It might have been well for Taylor's peace, if he had declined to answer what he could not notice without quickness of temper. It was his misfortune to realise the picture he had drawn, that "angry passion is a fire, and angry words are like a breath to fan it; together, they are like steel and flint, sending out fire by mutual collision,"<sup>1</sup> instead "of receiving the furies and indiscretions of the other, like a stone into a bed of moss and soft compliances."<sup>2</sup> He complains of the reviling and provocation of Jeanes, who, in his turn, asserted that the fierceness of Taylor's anger hindered him from "vouchsafing so much as a superscription" to the letter, in which

<sup>1</sup> Holy Living, chap. iv sec. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

he had endeavoured to sustain his original position. The quarrel of Milton and Salmasius recurs to the memory. "I shall never exempt you," writes Jeanes, "from a possibility of erring; never think that you sit upon a chair of Irish timber, that cannot endure a venomous spider to hang his web on." "I expect no answer," is the retort of Taylor; "I need none—I desire none. Your talents can better, if you please, serve God, than by cavilling, with or without reason." In this manner was a controversy conducted, respecting one of the darkest mysteries of our nature; and thus was the presence of sin manifested in the inquiry into its origin. When the buzz had died away, the sting remained, and Taylor long entertained a lively sense of the annoyances to which he had been exposed. "I have been so pushed at by herds and flocks of people that follow anybody that whistles to them, or drives them to pasture, that I am grown afraid of any truth that seems chargeable with singularity."<sup>1</sup> The sincerity of his own convictions is not to be questioned. "My comfort is," he wrote to Evelyn,<sup>2</sup> "that I have the honour to be an advocate for God's justice and goodness, and that the consequent of my doctrine is, that men may speak honour of God, and meanly of themselves."

It is curious to observe the repeated requests of Evelyn, that Taylor would provide for the scattered episcopalians some aids to "steer their course in

<sup>1</sup> Discourse on Friendship.

<sup>2</sup> Nov. 21, 1655.

that dark and uncomfortable weather.”<sup>1</sup> We are scarcely less surprised to find Taylor declining the task, in consequence of the devotion of his time to the “Cases of Conscience.”<sup>2</sup> The assistance which Evelyn sought was already supplied. Nearly five years before, the *Holy Living* had been published with the avowed object of guiding the flocks whose folds were broken down, and whose shepherds were driven into banishment; when religion was painted upon banners, and thrust out of churches. “I thought,” Taylor wrote to Lord Carbery, “I had reasons enough inviting me to draw into one body those advices which the several necessities of many men must use at some time or other, and many of them daily; that by a collection of holy precepts, they might less feel the want of personal and attending guides, and that the rules for conduct of souls might be committed to a book, which they might always have, since they could not always have a prophet at their needs, nor be suffered to go up to the House of the Lord, to inquire of the appointed oracles.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To Taylor, March (or May) 1655.

<sup>2</sup> To Evelyn. (St. Paul's conversion.) That Taylor contemplated such a work, we know from his own assurance. “But concerning a discourse upon the present state of things in relation to souls and our present duty, I agree with you that it is very fit it were done, but yet by somebody who is in London, and sees the personal necessities and circumstances of pious people. Yet I was so far persuaded to do it myself, that I had amassed together divers of my papers useful to the work.”

<sup>3</sup> *Holy Living*, Epistle dedicatory.

In the early part of 1656, Evelyn attempted to draw his friend from the seclusion of Wales into his own elegant abode. Nor was Taylor insensible to the intellectual allurements held out to him; but his poverty interposed an obstacle. "Sir, I know not when I shall be able to come to London; for our being stripped of the little reliques of our fortune remaining after the shipwreck, leaves us not cordage nor sails sufficient to bear me thither."<sup>1</sup> He expressed a hope, however, of visiting Says Court, at Easter; and his hope was realized; probably by the generous aid of that friend who had so many and just reasons for expecting that, by receiving a prophet, in the name of a prophet, he might also receive a prophet's reward.

Upon the 12th of April in that year, he dined with Evelyn, in company with Berkeley, Boyle, and Wilkins. Of Boyle, the faintest praise is conveyed in Evelyn's designation. "A great virtuoso," indeed, he was; but he was learned, only to be good. His piety was not in theory, but in practice; and his life expanded itself into a commentary upon his lessons. In the hands of such a man, the arts of human ingenuity became ennobled; and as Burke said of Reynolds, that in painting portraits he appeared not to be raised upon that platform, but to descend to it from a higher sphere; so we may affirm of Boyle, that he came upon the stage of literature with a bloom over his garments that breathed of a remoter and purer climate.

<sup>1</sup> To Evelyn, 1655-6.

Wilkins was a person of singular ingenuity, and deserves to be remembered as one of the earliest English scholars who endeavoured to make science popular and practical. His fancy, however, outran his judgment. His theory of a passage to the moon provoked the smile of his contemporaries, and subsequently caught the eye of Pope—

“ The head that turns at super-lunar things,  
Poised on a tail, may steer on Wilkins’ wings.”

His retort to the Duchess of Newcastle would alone have authorized a claim to conversational eminence. “ Where,” inquired that rhyming lady, “ am I to find a place to bait, if I try the journey to that planet?” “ Madam,” replied the discoverer, “ of all the people in the world, I least expected that question from you, who have built so many castles in the air, that you may lie every night in one of your own.” Wilkins appeals to our sympathy upon stronger grounds than his science or wit would furnish. Related to Cromwell by a marriage with his sister, he employed his influence on behalf of persecuted piety and learning, and the preservation of the universities has been attributed to his energetic remonstrance.

The following letter, written four days after Taylor’s entertainment at Says Court, is a very pleasing specimen of his earnest and thoughtful manner :—

“ TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE,

“ April 16, 1656.

“ HONOUR’D AND DEARE S<sup>r</sup>,—I hope your ser-



vant brought my apology with him, and that I already am pardoned, or excused, in your thoughts, that I did not returne an answer yesterday to your friendly letter. S<sup>r</sup>, I did believe myselfe so very much bounde to you for your so kind, so freendly reception of mee in your ‘Tusculanum,’ that I had some little wonder upon mee when I saw you making excuses that it was no better. S<sup>r</sup>, I came to see you and your lady, and am highly pleased that I did so, and found all your circumstances to be an heape and union of blessings. But I have not either so great a fancy and opinion of the prettinesse of your abroad, or so lowe an opinion of your prudence and piety, as to thinke you can be any wayes transported with them. I know the pleasure of them is gone off from their height before one month’s possession; and that strangers, and seldome seers, feele the beauty of them more than you who dwell with them. I am pleased, indeed, at the order and the cleannesse of all your outward things; and look upon you not only as a person, by way of thankfulness to God for his mercies and goodness to you, specially obliged to a greater measure of piety, but also as one who, being freed in great degrees from secular cares and impediments, can, without excuse and alloy, wholly intend what you so passionately desire, the service of God. But, now I am considering yours, and enumerating my owne pleasures, I cannot but adde that, though I could not choose but be delighted by seeing all about you, yet my delices were really in seeing



you severe and unconcerned in these things, and now in finding your affections wholly a stranger to them, and to communicate with them no portion of your passion but such as is necessary to him that uses them or receives their ministries.

“ Sr, I long truly to converse with you; for I doe not doubt but in those liberties we shall both goe bettered from each other. For your ‘Lucretius,’ I perceive, you have suffered the importunity of two kind friends to prevaile with you. I will not say to you that your ‘Lucretius’ is as far distant from the severity of a Christian as the faire Ethiopian was from the duty of Bp. Heliodorus; for indeed it is nothing but what may become the labour of a Christian gentleman, those things onely abated which our evil age needes not; for which, also, I hope you either have by notes, or will, by preface, prepare a sufficient antidote; but since you are ingag’d in it, doe not neglect to adorne it, and take what care of it it can require or neede; for that neglect will be a reproofe of your own act, and looke as if you did it with an unsatisfied mind, and then you may make that to be wholly a sin, from which only by prudence and charity you could before be advised to abstain. But, Sr, if you will give me leave, I will impose such a penance upon you for your publication of ‘Lucretius,’ as shall neither displease God nor you; and since you are buisy in that which may minister directly to learning and indirectly to error or the confidences of men, who of themselves are apt enough to hide

their vices in irreligion, I know you will be willing, and will suffer yourselfe to be intreated, to employ the same pen in the glorifications of God, and the ministeries of eucharist and prayer. S<sup>r</sup>, if you have M<sup>sr</sup> 'Silhon de l'Immortalité de l'Ame,' I desire you to lend it mee for a weeke; and believe that I am in great heartinesse and dearnesse of affection, dear S<sup>r</sup>, your obliged and most affectionate friend and servant,

JER. TAYLOR."

He probably remained in London until the close of May. On the 7th of that month, Evelyn visited him to procure ordination for a young Frenchman, in whom he felt interested, and who was sufficiently learned to converse in Latin with Taylor respecting his views of original sin. In July, he had returned to Wales, but still looked to a settlement in London with much anxiety and hope, being only hindered, as he told Evelyn, "by my *res angusta domi*; but hope in God's goodness, that He will create to me such advantages as may make it possible; and when I am there, I shall expect the daily issues of the Divine Providence to make all things else well; because, I am much persuaded that by my abode in the voysinage of London, I may receive advantages of society and books to enable me better to serve God, and the interest of souls." Indications of Christian help already showed that God was seconding the design "with his blessing."<sup>1</sup>

He found a sorrowful home in Wales; sickness

<sup>1</sup> To Evelyn, July 19, 1656.

broke into his family, and he was "in some little disorder by reason of the death of a little child," a boy, as he wrote, "that lately made us very glad, but now he rejoices in his little orb, while we think, and sigh, and long to be as safe as he is."<sup>1</sup> But even for this affliction his illuminated wisdom provided a remedy. We can see him take down from the shelf his own Holy Living, and linger over the beautiful meditation on early death, until the dim eyes of the father waxed radiant with the hope of the Christian. "If he died young," is his own glowing language, "he lost but little, for he understood but little, and had not capacities of great pleasures or great cares; but yet he died innocent, and before the sweetness of his soul was deflowered and ravished from him by the flames and follies of a froward age. And he hath obtained this favour of God, that his soul hath suffered a less imprisonment, and her load was sooner taken off, that he might with lesser delays go and converse with immortal spirits; and the babe is taken into Paradise, before he knows good and evil."

In the autumn of the year, (August 23, 1656,) he acknowledges the receipt of his friend's translation of Lucretius. He had apparently dissuaded him from the attempt, under an apprehension of its difficulties, and rejoiced to find himself mistaken, and to admire the ingenuity of the performance: "Me thinks now, Lucretius is an easy and smooth poet,

<sup>1</sup> To Evelyn, July 19, 1656.

and that it is possible for the same hand to turn Aristotle into smooth verse." This is the criticism of a friend. A woollen-draper in the city remarked to Gordon, that Tacitus had been *unclassicked*, but not *translated*; and the distinction may be applied to other authors. The Hector of the Iliad descends several centuries in the harmonious paraphrase of Pope; and one of Evelyn's most celebrated contemporaries added ornaments and colours of his own to the costume and scenery of Virgil. The choice of Evelyn was not wise, nor was his apprehension ill-founded that some readers would look severely at the numbers, or carp at the cadences of his verse.<sup>1</sup> He wanted fire as well as music. His language possesses none of the clearness and beauty, which the Grecian splendour of Lucretius requires to reflect its rays. His version resembles a rude engraving of Titian, where not a single glimpse is obtained of the golden lights and purple drapery of the picture.

Taylor never suffered his eye to be detained by mere literary charms, however dazzling. He thought that the faculty of song might be still better employed, than in transferring to English rhyme the softest notes of Latin fancy. "It is a thousand pities," he wrote to Evelyn, "but our English tongue should be enriched with a translation of all the hymns which are dispersed in all the rituals and church books. I was thinking to have

<sup>1</sup> See his Preface to the First Book of Lucretius, 1656.

begged of you a translation of that well-known hymn, ‘Dies iræ, dies illa, Solvet seclum in favillâ,’ which, if it were a little changed, would be an excellent divine song; but I am not willing to bring trouble to you; only it is a thousand times to be lamented that the beaux esprits of England do not think divine things to be worthy subjects for their poesy and spare hours.”

What strange emotions would have agitated his breast, if he could have been told, that, while he was thus complaining, one mighty spirit had bowed his energies to the task; that the fierce assailant of kings was meditating upon angelical hierarchies; and that the hand, which had woven the tale of enchantment,

“And sweetened every musk-rose of the dale,”<sup>1</sup>

was even then piling up the fabric of his heavenly argument, and sowing sweeter roses along the valleys of Eden. The commencement of *Paradise Lost* has, not without probability, been assigned to 1656.

It will be seen, from the next letter, that he still dwelt in the house of mourning;—

“Deare S<sup>r</sup>,—I know you will either excuse, or acquit, or at least pardon me that I have so long seemingly neglected to make a return to your so kind<sup>2</sup> & friendly letter; when I shall tell you that I have pass’d through a great cloud, which hath

<sup>1</sup> *Comus*.

<sup>2</sup> Taylor had originally written *kindly*; but the last two letters are crossed out. The letter to Sheldon (Add. MSS. 4 162, 19.) is not in the hand writing of Taylor.

wetted me deeper than the skin. It hath pleased God to send the small-pox and feavers among my children; and I have, since I received y<sup>r</sup> last, buried two sweet, hopeful boyes; and I have now but one sonne left, whom I intend (if it please God) to bring up to London before Easter; and then I hope to waite upon you, and by your sweet conversation and other divertisements if not to alleviate my sorrows, yet at least, to entertaine myself and keep me from too intense and actual thinkings of my troubles. Deare S<sup>r</sup>, will you doe so much for mee as to beg my pardon of Mr. Thurland, that I have yet made no returne to him for his so friendly letter and expressions. S<sup>r</sup>, you see there is too much matter to make excuse; my sorrow will, at least, render me an object of every good man's pity and commiseration. But for myself I bless God I have observed and felt so much mercy in this angry dispensation of God, that I am almost transported, I am sure, highly pleased with thinking how infinitely sweet his mercies are, when his judgments are so gracious. S<sup>r</sup>, there are many particulars in your letter to which I would faine have answered; but still, my little sadneses intervene, and will yet suffer me to write nothing else: but that I beg your prayers; and that you will still owne me to be

“Deare & honoured S<sup>r</sup>

“Your very affectionate friend and hearty servant,

“JER. TAYLOR.<sup>1</sup>

“Feb. 22, 1656-7.”

<sup>1</sup> No. 4274, (51) Add. MSS.



Of this letter, which, though it wants a superscription, was probably addressed to Evelyn, Heber remarks that the style and sentiments are so characteristic as to leave no doubt of its authenticity. If he had seen the original, he would have known that it required no internal testimony to establish its claim. It is in the small and elegant autograph of Taylor, and is now printed with attention to the writer's abbreviations and punctuation, which were not accurately preserved in Heber's transcript. It has been found difficult to reconcile the reference of Taylor to an only son, with his grand-daughter's mention of two sons, who lived to manhood. Heber suggests that "the two sons of his first wife were at this time separated from him and with their mother's family, and that the children whose death he laments, as well as the surviving son whom he proposes to bring to London, and who appears to have been afterwards buried at Lisburn, in Ireland, were the fruits of his second marriage."<sup>1</sup> The evidence of so near a relative is, of course, entitled to consideration; but the assertion of Taylor seems too precise to admit of a compromise; and it is more reasonable to conclude that the grand-daughter may have confused the number of her uncles, than that the father could have forgotten one of his sons.

<sup>1</sup> Life, p. 65.



## CHAPTER IX.

- I. Taylor is conjectured to have accepted a pastoral charge in London ; eminent lecturers — Pearson and Farindon. — II. Evelyn settles upon him an annnal pension ; his letter of acknowledgment. — III. Inscribes an Essay on Friendship to Mrs. Catherine Philips ; her character. — IV. Is overtaken by new troubles ; his imprisonment in the Tower ; released through the interest of Evelyn. — V. He comforts his friend on the death of his child.

SCENES, however beautiful, lose their charm when associated in our memory with sorrow and bereavement. Resignation does not forget ; and to Taylor, among the tranquil shades of Mandinnam, those little ones, who once made him glad, though dead, were yet speaking. It was this feeling, according to Wood, that induced him to relinquish the patronage of Lord Carbery, for the pastoral charge of a small congregation of episcopals in London. The lingering tradition of the neighbourhood countenances the report ; and Rust says, that “ though he had learned a quiet submission unto the Divine will, yet the affliction touched him so sensibly, that it made him desirous to leave the country.” The silence of Evelyn offers the only objection. For where should we expect

to find such ample notices of Taylor's ministry as in the journal of his affectionate admirer? Heber traces the rumour to his annual visits.

The circumstances of the time render it probable that the proposal may have been made. The Long Parliament had passed an ordinance, authorizing every parish to found a lecture and maintain a minister, to preach not only upon Sunday, but during the week. It came into operation in the autumn of 1641, and produced results not anticipated by its authors. Instead of crushing the episcopal party, it really strengthened it. By degrees, several churches left without their lawful pastors were supplied with preachers or lecturers, who were known to be friends of the exiled family, and the deprived episcopate.<sup>1</sup> The jurisdiction of the presbyterian or independent Triers was limited to benefices; and we find Pearson, in the parish church of St. Clement's, Eastcheap, delivering those lectures on the Creed which, in 1659, he shaped into his admirable Exposition; and Farindon invited to accept the lectureship of St. Mary Magdalen's, Milk-street. They who esteemed the calm learning of Pearson, and the energetic simplicity of Farindon, may have desired to kindle their devotion with the brighter flame of Taylor's eloquence.

Evelyn, whose flexibility of taste accommodated itself to every form of excellence, was an occasional

<sup>1</sup> Churton.

hearer of Pearson. In the autumn of 1652, he mentions him as a "most learned divine;" three years later, he went to hear him in the afternoon at St. Clement's; and the experience of seventeen years only deepened his sentiments of admiration. "1673, March 6.—Dr. Pearson, Bishop of Chester, preached on Hebrews, ix. 14; a most incomparable sermon, from one of the most learned divines of our nation." Evelyn knew him before Taylor, but he does not appear to have gone to him for spiritual instruction or advice. He may have been deficient in the engaging sweetness of his contemporary, and poverty and affliction had not endeared him to a benefactor. Unlike Taylor, the national shipwreck did not strip Pearson of all his fortune; during the stormiest season of civil warfare, he resided in London, supplying his small wants from his paternal property in Norfolk, and able to contribute something to the penury of his kindred. Three sermons only remain to indicate his simplicity and vigour. Burnet says that he was a judicious and grave preacher, more instructive than effective; but his *Treatise on the Creed* shows an acquaintance with rhetoric in its highest mood of dignity and impression.

Farindon, the friend of Pearson, resembled him in manner, and in the predominance of the scholastic and logical over the poetical and reflective temperament. He studied plainness and perspicuity, "as knowing that the majesty of divine truths is best

seen in the stole and gravity of the matron."<sup>1</sup> He died in his sixty-second year, and before the tempest had cleared away from the church. Like his brethren, he suffered many things in those dreary days; but he knew that "persecution is the honour, the prosperity, the flourishing condition of a church; for it brings her out of the shadow into the sun, makes her, indeed, visible, puts her to her whole armour, to her whole strength, to the whole substance of her faith."<sup>2</sup> He belongs to that school of divines which so successfully opposed the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism, and frequently recalls the argument and the language of Jackson and Barrow.

That Taylor was in London in 1657, we know from his visit, on the 25th of March, to Evelyn, who invited him to christen his son at Says Court. "I had forgotten to tell you," he wrote, June 9th, "and it did, indeed, extremely trouble me, that you were to expect my coach to wait on you presently after dinner, that you are not to expose yourself to the casualty of the tides, in repairing to do so Christian an office."

The regard of Evelyn did not evaporate in courtesy. One month earlier—May 9th—he had communicated to Taylor his intention of contributing an annual sum towards his necessities, and of influencing his brothers to aid him in the same

<sup>1</sup> Preface to xxx. Sermons, 1657.

<sup>2</sup> On Galat. iv. 39.

generous design. His kindness took a retrospective view. "Among the rest that are tributaries to your worth, I make bold to present you with this small token, and though it bears no proportion either with my obligation or your merit, yet I hope you will accept it as the product of what I have employed for this purpose; and which you shall yearly receive so long as God makes me able, and that it may be useful. What I can handsomely do for you by other friends, as occasions present themselves, may, I hope, in time supply that which I would myself do. In order to which, I have already made one of my brothers sensible of this opportunity to do God and his church an acceptable service. I think I shall prevail as much on the other."<sup>1</sup> The full heart of Taylor is poured out in the following letter; and two years after, when happier days had shone upon him, he wrote to Evelyn—"Be pleased to present my humble service to your honoured and worthy brother in Covent Garden."<sup>2</sup> And again, in the summer of the same year<sup>3</sup>—"I pray, Sir, be pleased to present my humble service to your two honoured brothers; I shall be ashamed to make any address, or pay my thanks in words to them, till my Rule of Conscience be publick, and that is all the way I have to pay my debts; that and my prayers that God would." He might now think that the

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Evelyn*, by Bray, ii. 171.

<sup>2</sup> April 9, 1659.

<sup>3</sup> From Portmore, June 4, 1659.

sting had been drawn out of poverty, of which he considered the only inconvenience to be "the fear of wanting necessities."<sup>1</sup>

"Honour'd and deare Sir,—A stranger came two nights since from you with a letter, and a token; full of humanity and sweetnesse that was, and this of charity. I know it is more blessed to give than to receive; and yet as I no ways repine at the Providence that forces me to receive, so neither can I envy that felicity of yours, not onely that you can, but that you doe give; and as you rejoyce in that mercy which daily makes decrees in heaven for my support and comfort, soe I doe most thankfully adore the goodnesse of God to you, whom he consigns to greater glories by the ministeries of these graces. But, Sir, what am I, or what can I doe, or what have I done, that you thinke I have or can oblige you? Sir, you are too kinde to mee and oblige me not onely beyond my merit, but beyond my modesty. I onely can love you, and honour you, and pray for you : and in all this I cannot say but that I am behind hand with you, for I have found so great effluxes of all your worthinesses and charities, that I am a debtor for your prayers, for the comfort of your letters, for the charity of your hand, and the affections of your heart. Sir, though you are beyond the reach of my returnes, and my services are very short of touching you, yet if it were possible for me to receive any commands,

<sup>1</sup> Holy Living and Dying, chap. ii. sect. 6.

the obeying of which might signify my great regards of you, I could with some more confidence converse with a person so obliging; but I am oblig'd and asham'd, and unable to say so much as I should doe to represent myselfe to be

“ Honour'd and deare Sir,

“ Your most affectionate and most obliged

“ Friend and Servant,

“ May 15, 1657.”

“ JER. TAYLOR.<sup>1</sup>

By a happy coincidence, he was now composing his charming Essay on Friendship. “Your kind letter,” he wrote to Evelyn, June 9, “hath so abundantly rewarded and crowned my innocent endeavours in my description of Friendship, that I perceive there is a Friendship beyond what I have fancied, and a real material worthiness beyond the heights of the most perfect ideas; and I know now where to make my book perfect, and by an Appendix to outdo the first Essay; for when anything shall be observed to be wanting in my character, I can tell them where to seek the substance, more beauteous than the picture, and by sending the readers of my book to be spectators of your life and worthiness, they shall see what I would fain have taught them by what you really are.”<sup>2</sup>

In the ardour of his gratitude, he remembered his pastoral duty, and reminded the patron of the

<sup>1</sup> To Evelyn, *Memoirs*, ii. 119.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs*, ii. 118.



temptations of the man.<sup>1</sup> In a letter from Evelyn to Taylor, written in the spring of 1656, we meet with an obvious allusion to a previous admonition, respecting the elegant ease and refinement of Says Court. "My condition is too well; and I do often wonder at it, or suspect, or fear it; and yet I think I am not to do any rash or indiscreet action, to make the world take notice of my singularity; though I do with all my heart wish for more solitude, who was ever most averse from being near a great city, designed against it, and yet it was my fortune to pitch here, more out of necessity and for the benefit of others, than choice, or the least inclination of my own. But, Sir, I will trouble you no more with these trifles, though as to my confessor I speak them." Evelyn, like greater men, sometimes deceived himself. He wrote a panegyric on active life against Sir George Mackenzie, and assured Cowley that he was not serious in its praise; he is known to have proposed to Boyle the erection of a college for contemplative philosophers, and to have been, at the same time, one of the most sociable persons of the age. Walpole thought that his disposition inclined him to

<sup>1</sup> And not long before his departure to Ireland, Taylor expressed his delight at the pious meditations of Evelyn: "I hope, in a short progression, you will be wholly immersed in the delices and joys of religion; and as I perceive your relish and gust of the things of this world goes off continually; so you will be invested with new capacities, and entertained with new appetites."

retirement, but that a knowledge of the indolence which it fostered in others, induced him to abandon and reprehend it. "There is no man," he said, "who more affects a country life than myself, no man, it may be, who has more experienced the delices of it. But even those, without action, were intolerable."<sup>1</sup>

The Essay on Friendship appears to have been designed for the private gratification of Mrs. Catherine Philips, to whom it was addressed. This lady, who, under the harmonious name of Orinda, attracted the art and learning of her times, was the daughter of a London merchant, and the wife of a gentleman at Cardigan. Dying in her thirty-third year, her memory was embalmed by the genius that had decorated her life. Cowley hung a garland upon her hearse. In one of his ingenious conceits, he compared her virtuous mind to an enclosed light, that illuminated the paper on which she wrote; and of her poetical productions he observed, with elegance that might recommend flattery—

"I must admire to see thy well-knit sense,  
Thy numbers gentle, and thy fancies high,—  
Those as thy forehead smooth, these sparkling as thine eye."

Her verses have more merit than a wit and a beauty may be thought to require. They are sometimes graceful, and generally musical; while the

<sup>1</sup> On Publick Employment and an Active Life, p. 92. 1667.

pause of Pope is frequently anticipated, as in the lines to the Countess of Carbery :—

“ And thus secured, to you who need no art,  
I, that speak least my wit, may speak my heart.”

And in these couplets the force and flow of the hexameter are well preserved:—

“ Friendship, which had a scorn or mask been made,  
And still had been derided, or betray’d,  
Or worn not as a passion, but a plot,  
At first pretended, and at last forgot.

“ And what more honour can at thee be hurl’d,  
Than to protect a virtue, save a world ?”

In the structure of these lines, the nightingale of Twickenham might have caught the tune of his own song.

Taylor’s acquaintance with Mrs. Philips probably began in Wales, where her charm of manner and vivacity of conversation must have sparkled with all the charm of contrast. “ I will not,” were his words, “ weigh the gayest flowers or the wings of butterflies against wheat; but when I am to choose wheat, I may take that which looks the brightest.” He did not reject a friend, because she was lovely. The Essay itself is the only example we have of his manner in that light and graceful literature, of which Cowley bequeathed the purest specimens. It abounds in lively images and pleasing illustrations; and Parr considered it to present the most eloquent description he had ever seen of universal benevo-

lence, and the correctest adaptation of it to our particular relations in society.<sup>1</sup>

It is one of the painful difficulties of Taylor's biographer, that he is often unable to trace his path except by his calamities. One of these was now to overtake him. His publisher, Royston, had prefixed to his "Collection of Offices" a print of our Saviour in the attitude of prayer, and by that representation, had rendered himself and the author liable to the penalties of an act, which the puritan legislature had recently passed to punish idolatry. Royston escaped, but Taylor was committed to the Tower. People had, by that time, begun to appreciate the promises of political reformers, and to understand, by experience, the daring tyranny of patriotism. Burnet tells us, that Cromwell and his council had grown insensible to the cruelty of arbitrary imprisonment, by the constant use of it. Men were confined on suspicion, or without any; frequently by way of precaution; and the beginning and termination of captivity depended on the caprice of the judge or the jailer. The history of Taylor affords an example. We learn from Evelyn, that it was the lieutenant of the Tower whom the printer had been so unfortunate as to offend, and whose permission for Taylor to wait upon him was so earnestly sought by his advocate. Whether the audience was granted, and the eloquent vindication and appeal of the prisoner touched the heart of the governor, or

<sup>1</sup> Notes to Spital Sermon.

whether some stronger influence changed his resolution, we are not informed. Heber says that, in the following February, Taylor came to condole with Evelyn upon the loss of his children; the date of his imprisonment is fixed in the January of 1656-7, and his letter of sympathy was written Feb. 17, 1657-8. The records of the Tower have been consulted in vain, the register of commitments only commencing with the Restoration. Heber discovers in the following letter the writer's expectation of being shortly at liberty; but the conditional promise of visiting Evelyn seems to be merely the devotional expression of Christian humility, and trust in the Divine protection.<sup>1</sup>

“Dear Sir,—If dividing and sharing griefes were like the cutting of rivers, I dare say to you, you would find your stream much abated; for I account myselfe to have a great cause of sorrow, not onely in the diminution of the numbers of your joys and hopes, but in the losse of that pretty person, your

<sup>1</sup> We may apply to Taylor the verses which Cowley addressed to the Bishop of Lincoln, upon his release from the same prison :—

“Your very sufferings did so graceful show,  
That some straight envied your affliction too;  
For a clear conscience and heroic mind  
In ills their business and their glory find;  
So, though less worthy stones are drown'd in night,  
The faithful diamond keeps his native light,  
And is obliged to darkness for a ray,  
That would be more opprest, than helpt by day.”

strangely hopeful boy. I cannot tell all my owne sorrowes without adding to yours; and the causes of my real sadnesse in your losse are so just and so reasonable, that I can no otherwise comfort you but by telling you, that you have very great cause to mourne : so certaine it is that grieve does propagate as fire does. You have enkindled my funeral torch and by joining mine to yours, I doe but encrease the flame. ‘Hoc me malè urit,’ is the best signification of my apprehension of your sad story. But sir, I cannot choose, but I must hold another and a brighter flame to you, it is already burning in your heart; and if I can but remoove the darke side of the lanthorne, you have enoughe within you to warme yourselfe and to shine to others. Remember, sir, your two boys are two bright starres, and their innocence is secured, and you shall never hear evil of them agayne. Their state is safe, and heaven is given to them upon very easy termes; nothing but to be borne and die. It will cost you more trouble to get where they are; and amongst other things one of the hardnessees will be, that you must overcome even this just and reasonable grieve; and, indeed, though the grieve hath but too reasonable a cause, yet it is much more reasonable that you master it. For besides that they are no losers, but you are the person that complains, doe but consider what you would have suffer’d for their interest: you [would] have suffered them to goe from you, to be great princes in a strange country: and if you can be content to suffer your



owne inconvenience for their interest, you command [commend?] your worthiest love, and the question of mourning is at an end. But you have said and done well, when you looke upon it as a rod of God; and he that so smites here will spare hereafter: and if you, by patience, and submission, imprint the discipline upon your owne flesh, you kill the cause, and make the effect very tolerable; because it is, in some sense chosen, and therefore in no sense, insufferable. Sir, if you do not looke to it, time will snatch your honour from you, and reproach you for not effecting that by Christian philosophy which time will do alone. And if you consider, that of the bravest men in the world we find the seldomest stories of their children, and the apostles had none, and thousands of the worthiest persons, that sound most in story, died childlesse: you will find it is a rare act of Providence so to impose upon worthy men a necessity of perpetuating their names by worthy actions and discourses, governments and reasonings. If the breach be never repair'd, it is because God does not see it fitt to be; and if you will be of this mind, it will be much the better. But, sir, you will pardon my zeale and passion for your comfort, I will readily confesse that you have no need of any discourse from me to comfort you. Sir, now you have an opportunity of serving God by passive graces; strive to be an example and a comfort to your lady, and by your wise counsel and comfort, stand in the breaches of your owne family, and make it appear that you are



more to her than ten sons. Sir, by the assistance of Almighty God, I purpose to wait on you some time next weeke, that I may be a wnesse of your Christian courage and bravery, and that I may see that God never displeases you as long as the main stake is preserved—I meane your hopes and confidences of heaven. Sir, I shal pray for all that you can want—that is, some degrees of comfort and a present mind; and shal always doe you honour, and faine also would do you service, if it were in the power, as it is in the affections and desires of

“Dear sir,

“Your most affectionate and obliged

“friend and servant,

JER. TAYLOR.”<sup>1</sup>

Feb. 17, 1657-8.

Of the beauty, genius, and piety of Evelyn’s “strangely hopeful boy,” his diary preserves several memorials. “I caused his body,” he writes, “to be coffined in lead, and repositied in the church of Deptford, intending, God willing, to have him transported with my own body, to be interred in our dormitory in Wotton Church, in my dear native county, Surrey, and to lay my bones and mingle my dust with my fathers, if God be gracious to me, and make me as fit for him, as this blessed child was. Here ends the joy of my life.” Never did affection breathe a more tender “hail and farewell!”

<sup>1</sup> To Evelyn, *Memoirs by Bray*, ii. 123.

## CHAPTER X.

- I. Taylor accepts a lectureship at Lisburn, in the county of Antrim.—II. Settles at Portmore; loveliness of the situation; ruins of a rustic study.—III. Pleasing reference to literature, in a letter to Evelyn.—IV. Is denounced by a presbyterian to the Irish Privy Council, and obliged to travel to Dublin in the winter.—V. Evelyn's Essay on Gardening.—VI. The Restoration; publication of the *Ductor Dubitantium*; Taylor and Milton.

THE inference from the narrative of Rust is, that Taylor passed from Wales to Ireland without any intermediate employment in pastoral duties. "Going to London," are his words, "he there met my Lord Conway, a person of great honour and generosity, who, making him a kind proffer, the good man embraced it, and that brought him over into Ireland, and settled him at Portmore, a place made for study and contemplation."<sup>1</sup> Bonney supposes Conway to have been a member of Taylor's congregation: he seems to have been introduced to him by Evelyn. Possessing extensive estates in the north eastern part of Ireland, he was justified in anticipating the happiest results from the missionary zeal and talents of Taylor. He was probably in-

<sup>1</sup> Funeral Sermon.

fluenced by mixed motives. "I thank God," he wrote to his relative, Major Rawdon, "I went upon a principle not to be repented of, for I had no interest or passion in what I did for him, but rather some reluctancy. What I pursued was, to do an act of piety towards all such as are truly disposed to virtue in those parts, for I am certain he is the choicest person in England appertaining to the conscience."<sup>1</sup> The proposed provision, arising chiefly from an alternate lectureship in Lisburn, a small town seventy-three miles from Dublin, in the county of Antrim, offered no remarkable temptation. Nor was Taylor gratified by the prospect. Lisburn, now one of the handsomest towns in the province of Ulster, was, in the time of James I., a very inconsiderable village, and had only begun to improve under the care of Lord Conway.

"I like not," was Taylor's characteristic reply, "the condition of being a lecturer under the disposal of another, nor to serve in my semicircle where a presbyterian and myself shall be, like Castor and Pollux, one up and the other down. Sir, the stipend is so inconsiderable, it will not pay the charge and trouble of removing myself and family. It is wholly arbitrary; for the triers may overthrow it; or the vicar may forbid it; or the subscribers may die, or grow weary, or poor, or be absent." This was written on the 12th May, (1658); and in the following month, he is believed to have quitted London for Ireland. His reason for accepting an ap-

<sup>1</sup> June 15, 1658.

pointment which he had so recently and decisively declined, may, perhaps, be found in some expected purchase of forfeited lands, which Dr. Petty promised to obtain for him.<sup>1</sup> Other inducements were not wanting. He was assured by Lord Conway of "many intimate kindnesses." He took with him the warmest recommendations from persons of the most distinguished rank in England; and that his introduction might fail in no particular of dignity, he was protected by a pass, under the sign manual and privy signet of Cromwell. The tradition of his descendants assigns to him a residence near Lord Conway's mansion,<sup>2</sup> at Portmore, which Rust informs us that he dearly loved. Heber thinks it probable that he only visited Lisburn—about nine miles distant—to fulfil his weekly engagement; and that he "often preached to a small congregation of loyalists in the half-ruined church of Kilulta."

In this statement, Bishop Mant has detected a slight inaccuracy. No parish of that name is contained in the diocese of Down and Connor; and in

<sup>1</sup> Taylor would feel no scruple upon this subject, since he had previously resolved a case of conscience submitted to him by Evelyn. "It is necessary that you employ your money someway for the advantage of your family. You may lawfully buy land, or traffique, or exchange it to your profit. You may do this by yourself or by another, and you may as well get something, as he get more, and that as well by money as by land or goods."—May 12, 1658.

<sup>2</sup> In the parish of Ballinderry. "The magnificent stables in the deer-park at Portmore were built by Taylor's friend, Lord Conway. The estate is now the property of his descendant, the Marquis of Hertford."—Bonney, 274 (1815.)

the townland, which is so called, neither church-yard, nor any vestige of a church, has been discovered. "It appears, however, that the church of Ballinderry, which was used before the building of the present one, was built in the time of King Charles II., and was always called the 'new church,' in contradistinction, as is supposed, to an old church, the ruins of which stand in an ancient churchyard, still an extensive burial-ground, on the margin of Lough Beg, at a very short distance from Portmore,"<sup>1</sup> and this is thought to be the church in which Taylor preached. But in correcting one mistake, Bishop Mant almost leads the reader into another. That Taylor preached to a small congregation of loyalists, is neither the assertion of Heber, nor of his informant, but his own. His duty at Lisburn was not parochial; and, however ardent his love of our Liturgy,—and it breathes from every page of his works—he was not authorised to interfere in its performance. We have, in a former page, heard him complaining to Evelyn of the precariousness of the appointment, as being liable at any hour to be forbidden by the vicar, or rendered unprofitable by the dissatisfaction of the subscribers. He was a lecturer, and probably delivered his discourses with that introductory form of prayer which is still used in our universities.

The change, for many reasons, may have been favourable to his happiness. At Portmore he found

<sup>1</sup> History of the Church of Ireland, 2nd edition, p. 600.

scenes of rural beauty, that reminded him of the woods and streams of Golden Grove. "The park is washed by the great lake of Lough Neagh, and by a smaller mere, called Lough Bag (or the Little Lake), each studded with romantic islets; to some of which, according to the tradition of the vicinity, it was Taylor's frequent practice to retire for the purposes of study or devotion. Ram Island, in Lough Neagh, and a smaller rock in Lough Bag, are said to have been his favourites; the one a mile from Portmore, and the other half the distance. The first is distinguished by the ruins of a monastery, and by one of those tall round towers of uncertain use and origin, which are a romantic and characteristic feature of Irish scenery." Both were described to Heber as scenes where a painter, a poet, or a devout contemplatist, might delight to linger.<sup>1</sup> I may add, that a visitor to this spot, between nine and ten years ago, found upon a small island in the Lough, the remains of a summer-house, in which Taylor is said to have frequently composed.

The tranquillity and sweetness of the landscape contributed to soothe his spirits, so long agitated by hopes and fears. To one friend he wrote from his "most charming recess at Portmore;"<sup>2</sup> and he assured Evelyn<sup>3</sup>—"My retirement in this solitary place hath been, I hope, of some advantage to me,

<sup>1</sup> Life of Taylor, 83.

<sup>2</sup> Ex amænissimo recessu in Portmore, dedit, Jeremias Taylor.

<sup>3</sup> Nov. 3, 1659.



as to this state of religion, in which I am yet but a novice; but, by the goodness of God, I see fine things before me, whither I am contending." It is not unpleasing to remember that, about seventy years before Taylor took up his abode at Portmore, Spenser had begun to moralise his song in the opposite part of Ireland. Some ruins of Kilcolman Castle yet remain, to remind the beholder of its illustrious inhabitant. The scenery yields to that of Portmore in variety and interest, consisting of corn-fields intersected by numerous hedges, and mountains not savage enough to be picturesque.

No Raleigh came to cheer the studies of Taylor; but his elaborate work on "Conscience" was advancing towards completion; and he "kept close all the winter," that he might bestow on it his undivided labour. From his loophole of retreat, like a humbler recluse of modern days, he looked out upon the world and literature, inquiring, with a scholar's anxiety—"What good books are lately public?—What learned men, abroad and at home, begin anew to fill the mouth of fame in the places of the dead Salmasius, Vossius, Mocelin, Sirmond Rigaltius, Des Cartes, Galileo, Peiresk, Petavius, and the excellent persons of yesterday?" From Evelyn he continued to receive pecuniary assistance in the regular, and therefore beneficial form of a pension;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Scattered through the works of Taylor will be found numerous allusions to the duty, as well as the privilege, of assisting our necessitous brethren. He regards the possession of means by our neighbour as justifying us in looking to him



and his recognition of the kindness is rendered still more touching by the confession, that from all his other acquaintances he had suffered some diminution of tenderness and regard, which he illustrates by the Spanish proverb, that the dead and the absent have few friends. The same letter gives a pleasing glimpse of his studious habits, and notices, also, one of the renewed trials to which he was exposed :—

“ Portmore, June 4, 1659.

“ HONOURED SIR,—I have reason to take a great pleasure that you are pleased so perfectly to retain me in your memory and affections, as if I were still neare you, a partner of your converse, or could possibly oblige you. But I shall attribute this so wholly to your goodnesse, your piety, and candour, that I am sure nothing on my part can incite or continue the least part of those civilities and en-

for relief in our wants; he speaks of this relation between the giver and receiver as a providential arrangement. Thus, in the “ Holy Living,” ii. 6—“ God will enable thee either to pay thy debt, (if thou beggest it of him), or else He will pay it for thee; that is, take thy desire as a discharge of thy duty, and pay it to thy creditor in blessings, or in some secret of his Providence. It may be he hath laid up the corn that shall feed thee in the granary of thy brother, or will clothe thee with his wool.” See also the prayer to be said by debtors, appended to the third chapter, and the letter, [May 15, 1657,] in which he acknowledges the first communication of Evelyn’s generosity: “ And as I rejoyce in that mercy which daily makes decrees in heaven for my support and comfort, so do I most thankfully adore the goodness of God to you, whom he consigns to greater glories by the ministeries of those graces.”

dearements by which you have often, and still continue to oblige me. Sir, I received your two little bookes, and am very much pleased with the golden booke of St. Crysostom, on which your epistle hath put a black enamel, and made a pretty monument for your dearest, strangest miracle of a boy; and, when I read it I could not choose but observe St. Paul's rule: *flebam cum flentibus*. I paid a teare at the hearse of that sweet child. Your other little Enchiridion is an emanation of an ingenious spirit; and there are in it observations, the like of which are seldom made by young travellers; and though, by the publication of these, you have been civil and courteous to the commonwealth of learning, yet I hope you will proceed to oblige us in some greater instances of your owne. I am much pleased with your waye of translation; and if you would proceed in the same method, and give us, in English, some devout pieces of the fathers, and your own annotations upon them, you would doe profit and pleasure to the publicke. But, Sir, I cannot easily consent that you should lay aside your 'Lucretius,' and having beene requited yoursele by your labour, I cannot perceive why you should not give us the same recreation, since it will be greater to us than it could be to you, to whom it was allayed by your great labour: especially you having given us so large an essay of your ability to doe it; and the world having given you an essay of their acceptation of it.

"Sir, that Pallavicini whom you mention, is the

author of the late 'History of the Council of Trent,' in two volumes in folio, in Italian. I have seene it, but had not leisure to peruse it so much as to give any judgment of the man by it. Besides this, he hath published two little manuals in 12mo. 'Assertionum Theologicarum;' but these speake but very little of the man. His history, indeed, is a great undertaking, and his family (for he is of the Jesuit order) use to sell the booke by crying up the man: but I thinke I saw enough of it to suspect the expectation is muche bigger than the thing. It is no wonder that Baxter undervalues the gentry of England. You know what spirit he is of, but I suppose he hath met with his match: for Mr. Peirs hath attacked him: and they are joyn'd in the lists. I have not seene Mr. Thorndike's booke. You make me desirous of it, because you call it elaborate; but I like not the title nor the subject, and the man is indeed a very good and a learned man, but I have not seen much prosperity in his writings: but if he have so well chosen the questions, there is no peradventure but he hath tumbled into his heape many choice materials. I am much pleas'd that you promise to inquire into the way of the Perfectionists; but I thinke L. Pembroke and Mrs. Joy, and the Lady Wildgoose, are none of that number. I assure you, some very learned and very sober persons have given up their names to it. Castellio is their great patriarch; and his Dialogue, 'An per Spir. S. Homo possit perfectè obedire Legi Dei;' is their first essay.

Parker hath written something lately of it, and in Dr. Gell's last booke in folio there is much of it. Indeed, you say right that they take in Jacob Behmen, but that is upon another account, and they understand him as nurses doe their children's imperfect language; something by use, and much by fancy: I hope, Sir, in your next to me (for I flatter myselfe to have the happinesse of receiving a letter from you sometimes), you will account to me of some hopes concerning some settlement, or some peace to religion. I feare my peace in Ireland is likely to be short; for a Presbyterian and a mad-man have informed against me as a dangerous man to their religion; and for using the signe of the crosse in baptisme. The worst event of the information which I feare, is my returne into England; which although I am not desirous it should be upon these terms; yet if it be without much violence, I shall not be much troubled.

“ Sir, I doe account myselfe extremely obliged to your kindnesse and charity, in your continued care of me and bounty to me; it is so much the more, because I have almost from all men but yourselfe, suffered some diminution of their kindnesse, by reason of my absence; for, as the Spaniard sayes, ‘ The dead and the absent have but few friends.’ But, Sir, I account myselfe infinitely oblig'd to you, much for your pension, but exceedingly much more for your affection, which you have so signally expressed. I pray, Sir, be pleased to present my humble service to your two honoured brothers: I

shall be ashamed to make any addresse, or pay my thanks in wordes to them, till my ‘Rule of Conscience’ be publike, and that is all the way I have to pay my debts; that and my prayers that God would. Sir, Mr. Martin, bookseller, at the Bell, in St. Paul’s Church-yard, is my correspondent in London, and whatsoever he receives, he transmits it to me carefully; and so will Mr. Royston, though I doe not often employ him now. Sir, I feare I have tir’d you with an impertinent letter, but I have felt your charity to be so great as to doe much more than to pardon the excesse of my affections. Sir, I hope that you and I remember one another when we are upon our knees. I doe not thinke of coming to London till the latter end of summer or the spring, if I can enjoy my quietnesse here; but then I doe if God permit: but beg to be in this interval refreshed by a letter from you at your leisure, for, indeed, in it will be a great pleasure and endearment to,

“ Honour’d Sir, .

“ Your very oblig’d, most affectionate and

“ humble Servant,

“ JER. TAYLOR.”<sup>1</sup>

Acting upon the accusation of this Presbyterian, —impelled, it is believed, by jealousy—the Irish Privy Council issued a warrant to the Governor of Carrickfergus, commanding him immediately to “cause the body of Dr. Jeremy Taylor to be sent up

<sup>1</sup> First printed by Heber.

to Dublin under safe custody"—in order that he might answer all charges on behalf of the commonwealth. The warrant is dated August 11, 1659; and Carrickfergus is only a few miles from Lisburn; it seems, therefore, difficult to explain the long interval that elapsed before it was enforced. Taylor writes to Evelyn, Feb. 10, 1659-60:—"I had been in the worst of our winter weather sent for to Dublin by our late anabaptist commissioners, and found the evil of it so great, that in my going I began to be ill; but in my return had my ill redoubled." His health was soon re-established, and the absence of any further entry in the Journals of the Council seems to intimate that he obtained an easy acquittal.

On the 3rd of the previous November, he acknowledged the pecuniary assistance which Evelyn had left for him in the hands of Mr. Martin, the bookseller, in St. Paul's Churchyard, not, as it appears, without some personal inconvenience, by reason of "the evil circumstances of the times."

As the spring returned, he thanked God for his restoration to strength, in the hope and prayer that he might devote it "*ad majorem Dei gloriam.*" His interest in the pursuits and anxieties of his friend remained unabated. Evelyn was then collecting materials for a *Treatise on Gardening*. "Sir, I know you are such a '*curieux*,' and withal so diligent and inquisitive, that not many things of the delicacy of learning, relating to your subject can escape you; and therefore it would be great



imprudence in me to offer my little mite to your already digested heap. I hope, ere long, to have the honour to wait on you, and to see some parts and steps of your progression; and then if I see I can bring anything to your building, though but hair and sticks, I shall not be wanting in expressing my readiness to serve and to honour you, and to promote such a work, than which I think, in the world, you could not have chosen a more apt and a more ingenious."<sup>1</sup>

In the same letter he repeats his hope of returning to England, as "soon as the weather and season of the spring give leave." He arrived at a moment singularly propitious to his fortunes. Nor could he have indulged any expectation that the meteors and evil prognostics in the sky,<sup>2</sup> which had long terrified men, were so soon to vanish, and that God's time had already come to relieve his church.<sup>3</sup> The death of Cromwell, September 3, 1658, dissolved the phantasm of a republic. A military despotism was growing out of a civil, when the interposition of Monk once more changed the aspect of affairs. Fuller notices this appearance of the political horizon with characteristic ingenuity. "Twilight is a great blessing of God to mankind; for, should our eyes be instantly posted out of darkness into light, out of midnight into morning, so sudden a surprisal would blind us. God, therefore, of his

<sup>1</sup> To Evelyn, Feb. 10, 1659-60.

<sup>2</sup> See his letter to Evelyn, Nov. 3, 1659.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



goodness hath made the intermediate twilight to prepare our eyes for the reception of the light. Such is His dealing with our English nation.”<sup>1</sup> The morning soon broke. On the 24th of April, 1660, Taylor, in company with many distinguished loyalists, signed the famous Declaration; within five weeks, Charles the Second resumed the sceptre of his ancestors—and Taylor testified his reverence by inscribing to him the elaborate production of a life. *The Ductor Dubitantium* was published in June.

It may be difficult to represent to ourselves his mingled feelings of gratitude and hope, as he watched this descending structure of his genius and learning; the task and consolation of many years; upon which his busy hand had never rested; to which he had intrusted the precious freight of his merchandize among the rich ancients; and which he looked upon as the bearer of his flag of imperial intellect, over the remotest waters of the civilized world. The history of his mightiest contemporary rises to the eye. *The Ductor Dubitantium* and *Paradise Lost* absorbed the noblest thoughts of the authors. Into those channels every stream of wisdom and knowledge was taught to flow. A religious solemnity encircled their labours in the beginning and the end; and however ardently the theologian and the poet may have invoked “Memory and her siren daughters,” they thought that prosperity could only be given to the work, by devout prayer to that

<sup>1</sup> Good Thoughts in Bad Times.

Eternal Spirit "who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to enrich and purify the lips of whom he pleases."

The comparison may be aptly extended to their lives; their paths were equally chequered. If Milton escaped some of the harsher afflictions of Taylor;—if penury and danger did not haunt his pleasant garden-house in Aldersgate-street, a sadder visitation was sent to chasten and try him. And while the philosopher could walk in his neighbour's pleasant fields,

—When morn  
Purples the East,—

or gaze on the sun, setting behind the trees of Grongar Hill, —the poet was encompassed by darkness and solitude, and lifted his eyes in vain to the returning

Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,  
Or light of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,—

The work of Taylor appeared in the triumph, that of Milton, in the overthrow, of his party. The temper of the age was alike unfavourable to both—Sprat was to become the model of our prose, and Waller, the critic of our poetry. Where could Taylor or Milton look for immediate sympathy and applause? It was Bacon reading his *Essays* on the *Boulevards*, or Raffaele exhibiting the *Transfiguration* in *Alsatia*.

The pen of Taylor did not sleep. This elaborate contribution to casuistical philosophy was followed, after an interval of only two months, by "The Worthy

Communicant," in which he unfolds the blessings to be derived from the holy receiving of the Lord's Supper, and supplies the minister with directions in difficult cases of conscience. The style breathes much of the warmth and fancy of his earlier writings; as in the remarkable illustration of the Sacramental mystery, which, like a doctrine of philosophy, has been "made intricate by explications, and difficult by the aperture and dissolution of distinctions. So we sometimes espy a bright cloud formed into an irregular figure; which, it is observed by unskilful and fantastic travellers, looks like a centaur to some, and as a castle to others; some tell that they saw an army with banners, and it signifies war; but another, wiser than his fellows, says it looks like a flock of sheep, and foretells plenty; and all the while it is nothing but a shining cloud, by its own mobility and the activity of a wind cast into a contingent and artificial shape; so it is in this great mystery of our religion, in which some espy strange things which God intended not; and others see not what God hath plainly told."

The funeral sermon for Sir George Dalston is included in the volume. Although not deficient in the author's usual animation and beauty of language and sentiment, it is inferior to his discourse on Lady Carbery, and, perhaps, to Donne's affecting character of Sir William Cokayne,<sup>1</sup> in which the description of the fleetingness of human grandeur is

<sup>1</sup> Preached Dec. 12, 1626.

particularly striking. "Consider the greatest bodies upon earth, the monarchies, objects which one would think destiny might stand and stare at, but not shake; consider the smallest bodies upon earth, the hairs of our head, objects which one would think destiny would not, or could not discern. And yet destiny (to speak to a natural man,) and God (to speak to a Christian,) is no more troubled to make a monarchy ruinous, than to make a hair grey." Our literature presents no antithesis of thought more distinct or forcible.

## CHAPTER XI.

I. Taylor is nominated to the See of Down and Connor ; his powerful claims — Usher, Hall, Hammond, Fuller, and Sanderson. — II. Lord Carbery made President of Wales. — Butler. — III. Consecration of the Bishops in St. Patrick's Cathedral ; Taylor preaches the Sermon. — IV. Troubled state of his diocese ; its gradual improvement. — V. Termination of his correspondence with Evelyn ; attempt to account for it. — VI. Sketch of Evelyn ; his talents and virtues.

THE learned ingenuity of the casuist offered no charms to the ear of a monarch, who admired the wit of Etheridge and the licence of Buckingham. But Taylor's services and sufferings could not be passed over ; and accordingly, on the 6th of August, 1660, we find him nominated to the see of Down and Connor. It might have been anticipated that a person so eminent and so honoured would have been retained in the country of his birth, which he had illuminated, in the darkest weather, by his piety and eloquence. If loyalty never tarnished, and sanctity never violated, could have pleaded in his cause, the appeal must have been irresistible. Among many faithless, ever faithful, no temptation of self-interest had allured him into the suburbs of revolutionism. The purity of his writings was

reflected in his life. Who among his contemporaries could prefer an equal claim? Hall, the imaginative and devout, and Usher, the sagacious and learned, in the same year were called to their crown, without beholding even the faintest dawn of the approaching renovation of that church, which they defended by their talents, and beautified by their lives. Hammond and Fuller enjoyed a clearer prospect; they perished in the hour of victory; henceforward to be numbered with the chosen worthies of England. Of the mighty men of old, Sanderson alone remained, bending under the burden of threescore and thirteen years. His name is endeared to our hearts by the sweetest devotion; and a painter might seek in vain for a happier subject than the Christian scholar in his sad-coloured dress, talking to Isaac Walton under a pent-house, in a shower of rain. But he possessed neither the vigour nor the capacity for business of Taylor. The king's adviser, in his ecclesiastical arrangements, is known to have been Sheldon, formerly Warden of All Souls', but then elevated to the Province of Canterbury. By his interest and persuasion, Sanderson received the diocese of Lincoln. Fuller styles him the "chief trustee" in recommending candidates for the vacant sees. We are not informed whether the destination of Taylor ought to be attributed to his suggestion. But if the king had any knowledge of Taylor's marriage with his natural sister, we may conclude, with Heber, that he would have readily removed to a distance



one "whose piety might lead him to condemn many parts of his conduct, and whose relationship might furnish him with a plausible pretence for speaking more freely than the rest of the dignified clergy."

It is a slight, but not uninteresting circumstance in the history of this period, that Lord Carbery, being made President of Wales, took up his abode at Ludlow Castle, and appointed Butler to be his secretary and steward. And thus a family and a castle, associated with the loveliest poetry of romance, and the noblest strains of Christian eloquence, were to be shone upon by the playful brilliancy of the burlesque; and Milton's *Mask* and Taylor's eloquence became blended with the festivity and satire of *Hudibras*.

To the dignity and office of a bishop was quickly added the vice-chancellorship of the University of Dublin. Taylor was consecrated, with eleven other bishops, in the cathedral of St. Patrick, January 27, 1661, and he preached a sermon on the occasion, which, according to the narrative of a contemporary, afforded great satisfaction, not only by the vivacity of the style, but the strength of the argument. "The whole ceremony was conducted without any confusion or the least clamour heard, save many prayers and blessings from the people, although the throng was great, and the windows throughout the whole passage of the procession, to and from the cathedral, filled with spectators."<sup>1</sup> In the following

<sup>1</sup> Mason's *St. Patrick's*, quoted by Bishop Mant.

April (30th,) the adjacent diocese of Dromore was united with Down and Connor, on account of the bishop's "virtue, wisdom, and industry." He had been made a member of the Irish Privy Council in the preceding February.

The church of Ireland, thus restored to her former splendour and harmony of episcopal government, had need of all the patience and light that piety and learning could impart. Her enemies were chiefly divided into two classes—Romanists and dissenters. The first, in their lives irregular, in their religion superstitious; the second, turbulent and presumptuous, Calvinistic in doctrine, and more than latitudinarian in discipline. The dissenters were peculiarly obnoxious to ecclesiastical interference. Conformity to the Book of Common Prayer became the condition of retaining a benefice. This law the bishops were bound to enforce.<sup>1</sup> But the primate set an example of moderation, and the presbyterian incumbents were permitted, and even exhorted, to receive episcopal orders.

The diocese of Taylor embraced all these elements of disorder. "It was in this part of Ireland, more than any other, that the clearance of the episcopalian clergy had been most effectual, and that their places had been supplied by the sturdiest champions of the covenant, taken, for the most part, from the west of Scotland—disciples of Cameron, Renwick, and Peden, and professing, in the wildest

<sup>1</sup> See Bishop Mant's History of the Church, i. 622.

and most gloomy sense, the austere principles of their party.”<sup>1</sup>

In an atmosphere so charged with fire, a conductor is easily found. 'The appointment of Taylor was received with a storm of indignation and invective from almost every pulpit. His efforts to mitigate and allay it were unwearied and constant. Carte mentions them in the *Life of Ormond*. In public and in private, by preaching and conversation, he endeavoured to convince his opponents. Nor was he entirely unsuccessful. Many ministers gradually yielded to his arguments and exhortations, while among the laity his labours brought forth more abundant fruit. In cases where gentleness and entreaty failed, the arm of authority was the only remedy. Of those presbyterians who defied his jurisdiction, and refused to attend his visitation, ejection from their livings was the just and unavoidable punishment; while the admission of more peaceful successors promoted the tranquillity and order of the diocese. When the church of Ireland was called to bewail the death of Bramhall, Taylor drew a lively picture of the difficulties and toil of weeding her fields, overgrown and out of cultivation.

That he was not indisposed to follow the rules of toleration which, many years before, he had marked out, is proved by his sermon at the opening of the Irish Parliament on the 8th of May, 1661. He

<sup>1</sup> Heber.

admonished them to oppress no man for any differences of religious opinion; to dispense justice from the same scale to Romanist, Lutheran, or Calvinist; to convert antagonists by purity of conduct; to be charitable in the faith they professed, and “to do as God does, who, in judgment, remembers mercy.”

In the midst of ecclesiastical turmoil and private occupations, he found time to write a short, but affectionate letter to Evelyn,<sup>1</sup> and to inquire after “his excellent observations and discourses of gardens,” of which “a little posy,” presented by his friend, had caused him to desire a larger specimen.

The letter is interesting, as the last that has been discovered, and probably the last that he wrote to the friend whom he had known so long, and tried so often. Curiosity is tempted to inquire whether the neglect of Taylor, or of Evelyn, cast the earliest shade upon an intercourse once fruitful in piety and affection. There is nothing but conjecture to assist us in the investigation. We have already seen Taylor’s tender reference to Evelyn, as the only friend who remembered him during his residence at Portmore. Perhaps his elevation to the episcopacy contributed to withdraw him from the observation of Evelyn. Our eye is turned, with more than common wakefulness, upon those whom we cherish or protect; their weakness and dependence are bonds of union; and the suffering

<sup>1</sup> November 16, 1661.

child loses some of its mother's solicitude when it takes leave of the pillow. As the worldly circumstances of Taylor improved, the links that connected him with Says Court might be loosened or broken. Absence is a powerful agent in unwinding the chain. Whoever has revisited scenes and persons from whom he had long been separated, must have sighed over the comparative indifference that welcomed his return. Other associations have effaced his own. The most familiar doors turn upon a rusty hinge; and little remains for him to do but to moralize over the fragility of the structures which expectation builds, and the weakness of the Egyptian reeds on which it leans.

The wisdom of Taylor alleviated his regret. He had long before observed, with equal beauty and truth, that there is no love or friendship without the interchange of conversation; "friendships, indeed, may last longer than our abode together, but they were first contracted by it, and established by pleasure and benefit, and unless it be the best kind of friendship, it dies when it wants the proper nutriment and support, and to this purpose is that which was spoken by Solomon—*Better is a neighbour that is near, than a brother that is far off.*"

That the first signs of indifference were manifested by Evelyn, we may, perhaps, read an intimation in the closing letter of Taylor:—"Do not, therefore, think me impertinent or otherwise without employment, if I do with some care and earnest-

ness inquire into your health, and the present condition of your affairs." And again—"Dear Sir, I pray let me hear from you as often as you can, for you will very much oblige me, if you will continue to love me still." These are the tender complaints of one who felt that he was neglected.

The apparent inattention of Evelyn may, in some degree, be explained by the circumstances of his position. The Restoration changed the current of his life, and involved him in the business, and some of the more harmless amusements, of the gayest carnival in Europe. The philosopher began to flutter into the courtier. In 1660, he was occupied by a task which the king imposed on him. Graver employment soon demanded more earnest application. In 1664, he was appointed a commissioner of the sick and wounded; his district included the ports between Dover and Portsmouth; and at one period his list contained three thousand Dutch prisoners. The labour of such an office could not have been slight, and it obliged him to visit London, when the plague had spread death in the houses and grass in the streets. But the heart of friendship may beat when its tongue is silent. Taylor would remember his own caution<sup>1</sup>—"Be sure to choose a friend whom you will never be able to hate; for though the society may justly be interrupted, yet love is an immortal thing." And the sight of Taylor's daughter, at a meeting of the Royal Society, drew

<sup>1</sup> A Discourse on Friendship, p. 100. 1662.



from Evelyn a brief, but earnest sigh for "his late worthy and pious friend."

Of a man who spent eighty-six years in a course of research, study, curiosity, instruction, and benevolence, it is not possible to speak without regard. His name quickened the fastidious languor of Walpole. He lived in times that heightened the expression of the intellectual features, and his figure occupies a place in the most picturesque and eventful scenes of our history. We behold him among the fiery cavaliers of Charles, and the dark puritans of Cromwell; in the brilliant festival of the Restoration; in the gloom of returning Romanism under James, and in the bloodless revolution of William. The life of Evelyn is an episode in the annals of five reigns. Known by men of all parties, and beloved by whomsoever he was known, he exerted the authority of his character to protect the oppressed; and prevailed upon the friend of a regicide to assist the chaplain of a martyr. Few eyes have beheld more mournful or brighter visions of persecution and bravery. He witnessed the ruin of the church, and the plunder of the priesthood; and as, in his manhood, he saw Taylor driven from his parsonage into a village school, and Laud from his palace to a block; so, in his age, he watched the departure of Ken from his cathedral, and Sancroft, grey with years and sanctity, retiring from Lambeth to a cottage-garden at Fressingfield.

In his protracted pilgrimage of fourscore years and six, the changes in literary taste were not less



remarkable than the fluctuations of public opinion. The magnificent system of eloquence which Taylor constructed, after passing through the fiery compression of Barrow, flowed with diminished richness into the smooth good sense of Tillotson. Beginning with Vandyck's august representations of knights, and Taylor's criticisms on Lucretius, he ended with requesting Burnet to sit for his portrait to Kneller, and talking over the supper-table to Dryden about his translation of Virgil.

The splendid rhetoric and various imagery of the House of Feasting, and the seraphic ardour of the author, had grown dim in his recollection, when, in 1695, he described Stanhope as one of the most accomplished preachers he ever heard, for matter, eloquence, action, and voice; and hailed the elevation to the Primacy of his "dear and worthy friend, Dr. Tenison." The age of heroic character was gone; the Apostolic crown emitted a fainter lustre; and the bustle of Burnet introduced the political school of theology.

Evelyn owes the prominence of his literary position not so much to his taste and attainments, as to his virtues and his friends. The benefactor of Taylor, the correspondent of Cowley, and the companion of Boyle, he inspired the Muses of eloquence, poetry, and science. Without genius, or the dazzling reflection of it which may be called the highest talent, he ranks among the most distinguished persons of the seventeenth century. He turned his face to the light of knowledge in every direction, and ex-

amined, with equal interest, the travels of Chardin, the instruments of Flamsted, or the drawings of Wren. His classical scholarship was small; but he could read Plutarch, and enjoy Virgil: with the French, Italian, and Spanish languages he was sufficiently familiar. His love of art was lively, and his perception of its beauties not languid; whether gazing on the mild solemnity of Raffaele, the lustrous truth of Titian, or the crowded magnificence of Tintoretto. What he did for the embellishment of our homes, who can walk in the melancholy gardens of old houses without remembering? But the pre-eminent charm of his character—that which has recommended it to every gentle and reflective heart, is its natural and earnest piety; sincere and affectionate as it is compassionate and tolerant; not rejecting any decoration of literature, vapour though it be, which the ray of religious thought might warm and colour; nor regarding the refinements of taste and the curiosity of intellect as unfavourable to the reverential preservation, or the invigorating action of that holy Faith, which conducted him through the trials of earth into his mansion of glory.

## CHAPTER XII.

- I. Probable advantages of his preferment ; his generosity to the poor, and patronage of deserving scholars—Bedell and Usher. — II. Preaches a sermon at the funeral of Archbishop Bramhall ; striking quotation from it. — III. His Dissuasive from Popery characterised ; Coleridge's remark. — IV. The health of Taylor declines ; his illness and death. — V. The alleged violation of his remains disproved by the investigation of Bishop Mant ; his monument. — VI. Some notices of his family.

WITH whatever sentiments the comparative neglect of Taylor may be regarded, it is not improbable that his happiness was increased by the scene of his promotion. Continuing to reside in the neighbourhood of Portmore, where he had a house and farm, he was surrounded by the friends whom his lectureship at Lisburn had procured for him, and could repay the kindnesses they had formerly bestowed. When Sanderson was raised to the see of Lincoln, the visits of his old parishioners from Boothby Pannel always made his table joyful ; and Taylor possessed a temper of equal hospitality and affection. No reader of his works will doubt that he dispensed his revenues with liberality and wisdom. He rebuilt the choir of the cathedral of

Dromore, and his wife presented the communion plate. The little interval of peaceful competency at Uppingham excepted, he was, for the only time in his life, independent of external assistance. Rust tells us that he enjoyed a plentiful income. The recipient was now the benefactor. Sir James Ware says that he devoted his means to public and private benevolence.<sup>1</sup> Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, providing for the fatherless, apprenticing poor children, and maintaining youths of promise at the University,—in these, and similar offices of Christian stewardship, his remaining years were passed. He seemed to take the torch from the exhausted hands of Bedell and Usher; to the self-denial and enthusiasm of the first adding the erudition and eloquence of the second. A peculiar sanctity was associated with the name of Bedell; even hatred was calmed by its sound; and when his remains were deposited in a retired corner of Kilmore churchyard, under the boughs of a cypress-tree that his hand had planted, the shout of the rebels, as they fired over the tomb, pronounced his panegyric—"May the last of the English rest in peace." The gracefulness and dignity of his countenance and manner conciliated respect; and, like Taylor, he won hearts before he convinced them.

Whether with health unimpaired, and spirits unbroken by domestic bereavements, the foot-

<sup>1</sup> History of Ireland, i. 210.

steps of Bedell would have been followed by Taylor, we are furnished with no means of deciding. The missionary spirit has different manifestations. In the first year of his residence, his son Edward was buried at Lisburn, March 10, 1661. Heavier blows soon followed. In the meantime, he put his hand diligently to the plough, and in the autumn of the year invited from Cambridge Dr. George Rust, an amiable and accomplished scholar, whom he appointed to the deanery of Connor, and who, after occupying the same episcopal chair for three years, was laid by the side of his friend. In 1662, he published three sermons, with a dedication to the Duchess of Ormond, and not long afterwards inscribed to the Duke, recently appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, a Discourse on Confirmation, which he considered to be not only an endearment to the other parts of religion, but the consummation of baptism, a preparation to the Lord's Supper, and the solemnity of our spiritual adoption.<sup>1</sup>

The death of Bramhall, Archbishop of Armagh, furnished him with a new theme for religious admonition, and the sermon preached at his funeral, July 16, 1663, contains several passages in Taylor's darkest and sternest manner, especially the description of the sinner's resurrection:—"As for the recalling the wicked from their graves, it is no otherwise in the sense of the Spirit to be called a resurrection, than taking a criminal from the prison to

<sup>1</sup> See Epistle Dedicatory.

the bar is a giving of liberty. When poor Acilius Aviola had been seized on by an apoplexy, his friends, supposing him dead, carried him to his funeral pile; but when the fire began to approach, and the heat to warm the body, he revived, and seeing himself encircled with general flames, called out aloud to his friends to rescue, not the dead, but the living Aviola, from that horrid burning; but it could not be; he only was restored from his sickness to fall into death, and from his dull disease to a sharp and intolerable torment. Just so shall the wicked live again; they shall receive their souls, that they may be a portion for devils; they shall receive their bodies, that they may feel the everlasting burning; they shall see Christ, that they may 'look on him whom they have pierced;' and they shall hear the voice of God passing upon them the intolerable sentence; they shall come from their graves that they may go into hell; and live again, that they may die for ever."

In the same year, he committed to the press his admirable *Dissuasive from Popery*, undertaken at the request of the Irish bishops, and presenting a summary of all the forcible arguments that have ever been urged against the pretensions of Romanism. A strong sense of duty alone prevailed on him to return to controversy, which he considered the worst sort of learning and least beneficial to mankind. But having resolved to descend into the field, he arrayed himself in his brightest armour, and in none of his combats does he exhibit a per-



fector skill in the use of his weapons, or more wonderful agility and hardihood in attacking an opponent. His fancy is the sunshine to his shield; and, like the Homeric hero, he continually flashes out from the cloud and dust of the conflict, with the fire on his helmet, and the trophy of conquest in his hand. Coleridge drew attention to the inimitable account of a religious dispute from the first collision to the spark, and from the spark to the flame and conflagration. The success of the work was rapid and extensive. Rust says, that it "was received by a 'general approbation,' of which we have an illustration in two virulent attacks upon it by a jesuit and a secular priest; they appeared in 1665. Taylor prepared a vindication of his original statements, not published until after his death, and designed, according to his memorialist, "for some impertinent cavillers, that pretend to answer books, when there is nothing towards it more than the very title-page."

But he—who along the chequered and stormy path of life had ever been asking his way to Sion, with his face thitherward, and inquiring, by every holy ordinance and contrite prayer, "*Rabbi, where dwellest thou?*"—was now to receive the gladdening answer—"Good and faithful servant, *come and see!*" On the 3rd of August, 1667, the symptoms of a fever began to show themselves, and rapidly became alarming. The aged hand, that gave so affecting a narrative of the decaying strength and devout faith of Herbert, might have found traits

worthy of its art beside the pillow of Taylor. But that scene is hidden from our eyes. His beautiful comparison of the sickness of some favoured Christians to the serenity of Adam's early morning in Paradise,<sup>1</sup> may not have been realized in his own experience. He looked upon an easy and painless dissolution as the gift of a special Providence, neither to be secured by piety, nor always to be hoped by it.<sup>2</sup> But if, in those hours of agony and watchfulness, his memory could speak any "word in season to him who" was "weary," we may believe that such a passage as this would not be forgotten:

"When a good man dies, one that hath lived innocently, or made *joy in heaven*, at his timely and effective repentance, and in whose behalf the holy Jesus hath interceded prosperously, and for whose interest the Spirit makes interpellations with groans and sighs unutterable, and in whose defence the angels drive away the devils on his death-bed, because his sins are pardoned, and because he resisted the devil in his life-time, and fought successfully, and persevered unto the end,—then the joy breaks forth through the cloud of sickness, and the conscience stands upright, and confesses the glories of God, and owns so much integrity that it can hope for pardon, and obtain it too; then the sorrows of the sickness, and the flames of the fever, or the faintness of the consumption, do but untie the soul

<sup>1</sup> Holy Dying, ch. iii. sec. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ch. ii. sec. 4.

from its chain, and let it go forth, first into liberty, and then to glory.”<sup>1</sup>

It was not the will of the Divine Physician of souls to restore him to the society of the living, but to remove him from the outer courts into the eternal Temple. Upon the tenth day the fever left him, and life was lost in immortality. Thus, at Lisburn, upon the 13th of August, 1667, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the seventh of his episcopate, expired the more than Chrysostom of England. The age was, indeed, evil, and deserved him not; nor can we believe that he regarded a protracted life with desire or satisfaction. In the full sunshine of manhood he had cast forward a moralizing eye. “In forty or fifty years we find evils enough and arguments enough to make us weary of this life; and to a good man, there are many more reasons to be afraid of life than death, this having in it less of evil and more of advantage.”<sup>2</sup> He passed through the dark gate into the Garden, when the eye of fancy had not grown dim, nor the arm of intellect become feeble. Having borne the heat and burden of the day, he received his wages, before the sun was set, and the dews of night began to descend. Called home in the rich autumn of his life, he was busy in the field and the harvest; the sheaves lay piled round him when he fell asleep,

“And from his slack hand dropp’d the gather’d rose.”

His body was interred in the choir of the church of

<sup>1</sup> Holy Dying, chap. ii sec. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. chap. iii. sec. 8.

Dromore; and Heber relates, with affectionate indignation, that "about a century afterwards, his bones, and those of his friend Rust, were disturbed from their vault to make room for another bishop;" adding, that "the late Bishop Percy had them carefully collected and replaced."

Upon this melancholy narrative, Dr. Mant has succeeded in throwing considerable doubt, if not in refuting it altogether.<sup>1</sup> He shows that the only bishop who died in possession of the see of Dromore, from 1713 to 1781, the date of Bishop Percy's appointment, was Marlay, who expired suddenly in Dublin, April 13, 1763, and whose place of burial has not been discovered, although, in the opinion of his lineal representative, he was not buried at Dromore, nor is there any evidence, either written or traditionary, to render it likely that his interment occasioned the removal of Taylor's remains. The name of Percy has given a colour to the legend. From the restorer of our old poetry we might have expected the tender interest in an illustrious predecessor, which the story ascribes to him. But no circumstance of the kind seems to be in the recollection of his domestic chaplain, who had frequently heard him speak of Taylor; nor has the present Bishop of Elphin, who, in 1811, followed Percy at Dromore, retained any remembrance of such a transaction. The finger of tradition points out the tomb of Taylor under the communion-table; and when

<sup>1</sup> History of the Church of Ireland, i. 673.

the vault was opened, about twenty years ago, a leaden coffin was found, with the initials J. T. inscribed on the lid: this is supposed to contain the ashes of Taylor.

The place of his mortal repose is no longer unmarked. In 1827, Bishop Mant and his clergy erected a white marble tablet in the cathedral church of Lisburn, decorated on each side by a crosier, and above, by a sarcophagus, on which is laid the Holy Bible, surmounted by a mitre. An elegant and appropriate epitaph records the piety and genius of the departed. The offering of Christian admiration cannot be despised. But to Taylor himself all monumental inscriptions were unpleasing. In one of the last pages, perhaps, that his hand ever wrote, he disclaimed any wish to have his body enshrined in a rich mausoleum:—"Nor do I desire a stately sepulchre, a beautiful urn, or that my name and actions should be engraven in marble."<sup>1</sup>

Taylor did not bequeath his name to any sons; they whom early sickness had not removed are said to have perished under circumstances of mournful recollection; one in a duel with an officer of the same regiment, and the other of consumption, at the seat of the Duke of Buckingham, of whom he was the favourite companion and secretary. The fate of the elder is related on the authority of his niece, Lady Wray; but the difficulties of admitting it are

<sup>1</sup> *Contemplations of the State of Man*, published after his death.

noticed by Heber. The tradition may be correct in the chief facts, though erroneous in minor particulars. The shock, which the catastrophe is said to have given to Taylor's constitution, was likely to fix it in the memory of his descendants. He had taught parents to pray, and doubtless had often repeated the petition, that their children may never "live vicious lives, nor die violent or untimely deaths."<sup>1</sup> But every revelation of his noble spirit shows us that he regarded the fall of the hero, or the translation of the martyr, as subjects of no lamentation to the survivors. His system of education embodied the Grecian hardihood of Milton. "But fathers, because they design to have their children wise and valiant, apt for counsel or for arms, send them to severe governments, and tie them to study and hard labour, and afflictive contingencies. They rejoice when the bold boy strikes the lion with his hunting-spear, and shrinks not when the beast comes to affright his early courage. The man that designs his son for noble employments, to honours and to triumphs, to consular dignities, and presidencies of councils, loves to see him pale with study, or panting with labour, or eminent by dangers."<sup>2</sup> Nor did he think that the early cutting down of the plant rendered its dressing and cultivation unprofitable:—"Why are we troubled that he had arts and sciences before he died?—or are we troubled because he does not live to make use of them? The

<sup>1</sup> Prayers appended to *Holy Living*, ch. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Holy Dying*, chap. iii. sec. 6.



first is cause of joy, for they are excellent in order to certain ends; and the second cannot be cause of sorrow, because he hath no need to use them, as the case now stands, being provided for with the provisions of an angel, and the manner of eternity.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, with reference to his elder son, the manner of the death would give to the loss a sharper edge.

His eyes were probably closed before the news of his younger son’s decease reached Portmore. But he could hardly have been ignorant of his illness, or of the course of life that occasioned or promoted it. Destined for the service of the church by the piety of his father, and educated with that view in the University of Dublin, he had been drawn aside by the temptations of Charles’s abandoned court. It is a melancholy reflection, that Taylor may have seen, in the last days of one so dear to his heart, the wasting prodigal of his own description;<sup>1</sup> when the eye, dim as a sullied mirror, beholds affrighting shapes; and the parting spirit, instead of shining beneath the eye of the appearing Redeemer, passes from the body into some dark prison of earth or air, in secret and undiscerned regions, to weep and tremble, and infinitely to fear the coming of Christ. How must we sigh that such a father was not stooping over the penitence of such a child; and that Taylor was unable to bear to the stricken friend of Villiers that message of hope and pardon, with

<sup>1</sup> In the Holy Dying.

which Burnet bound up the wounded soul of Rochester!

Heber discovered that the widow of Taylor survived him, but the place and period of her death are not known. Her portrait, in the possession of Mrs. Wray, represents "a fine woman with a pleasing oval countenance, and naked hands and arms of much beauty, standing in an arbour, and suspending a branch of laurel over a bust of Charles I., which is placed beside her." Of his three daughters, Phœbe, the eldest, died unmarried; the second, Mary, became the wife of Dr. Marsh, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, and is mentioned by Evelyn, who once met her at the Royal Society (Feb. 24, 1680), as a knowing woman beyond the ordinary talent of her sex. The husband of the third daughter, Joanna, was Mr. Harrison, an Irish barrister, who for a long time represented the town of Lisburn in parliament.

## CHAPTER XIII.

- I. Personal appearance of Taylor; his portrait at All Souls; compared with Spenser—II. His domestic life, and estimate of the feminine character; Milton.—III. Differs from Chrysostom in the practical energy of his mind; his political opinions.—IV. Apology for his occasional adulation.—V. His musical taste; the organ; Milton's description in the *Penseroso* illustrated.

TAYLOR was distinguished by great beauty of countenance; and Heber observes that few authors have so frequently introduced their own portraits as ornaments to their printed works. In the *Holy Living* he appears as the Christian herald, and in the *Holy Dying* he points to the emblems of mortality in a glass. But if, at any time, a feeling of vanity arose in his breast, he would doubtless call to mind the excellent caution he had provided against such a temptation:—"If a man thinks well of himself for being a handsome person, or if he be stronger and wiser than his neighbours, he must remember that what he boasts of will decline into wickedness and dishonour."<sup>1</sup> Two portraits of Taylor are known; one, in the possession of the Marsh family, was lost

<sup>1</sup> *Holy Dying*, chap. iii. sec. 8.

in crossing a dangerous ford; but a copy of it is preserved, from which an engraving was made for Archdeacon Bonney's memoirs. The other, presented to All Souls by Mrs. Wray, of Anne's Vale, near Rosstrevor, hangs in the college hall, opposite to the portrait of Heber, who obtained a drawing from it for his life of the Bishop. The picture satisfies the expectation of the most enthusiastic admirer. It glows with a light and bloom of intellect and grace, beyond the skill of the graver to copy, and exhibits traces of that feminine sweetness of expression which Coleridge looked upon as the evidence of refined genius. It represents him in the vigour of life, when the fire, not the brightness of youth, had yielded to the influence of meditation and experience. Some shades of sorrow may also be marked in it. It is pleasing to know that it forms an object of attraction in the college it adorns, and that the first inquiry of a stranger is after the portrait of Taylor. At Cambridge, the picture of Spenser in the combination room of Pembroke College, excites the same curiosity and interest, and reflects, with equal happiness, the mental physiognomy of the original. The poet looks as if he had just returned from those dark woods, where the face of Una makes "a sunshine in the shady place."

Of Taylor's private habits, peculiarities, and amusements—slight circumstances which are so valuable in the history of genius—no particulars have been recovered. We are told of his contem-

porary, Pearson, that perceiving, when at college, the fireside to divert his thoughts and dull "his spirit, he avoided coming near it as much as possible, contented to sit close to his books, with a blanket thrown over his shoulders." But Taylor found no good-natured Allen to record any anecdotes of his youth; and time and accident have deprived us of all other assistances. His biography, like Shakspeare's, in his writings. Rust, indeed, gives an account of him; but in such a blaze of admiration, who can hope to distinguish the lineaments of nature? It is not a picture, but a transparency, and the artificial illumination injures the colours. He describes him as a person of most sweet and obliging humour, of great candour and ingenuity, and with so much of "salt, and fineness of wit, and prettiness of address, in his familiar discourse," that his conversation sparkled with amusement, while it impressed the understanding by its serious wisdom. His secretary, Alcock, said, that it was a pleasure to hear him talk, even with the humblest people.

No mention of his wife or daughters occurs in any of his published correspondence with Evelyn, embracing the most eventful periods of his life. Sometimes an indirect allusion may be detected, as in the letter in which he communicates the loss of a little boy who had "lately made us very glad."<sup>1</sup> A plural pronoun is our strongest witness to his

<sup>1</sup> We meet with a similar phrase in a dedication to Lady Carbery (Great Exemplar, Part iii.), where he acknowledges her "noble usages of me and mine."

domestic tenderness. Evidence, indeed, is not wanting. Every reader of his works will reject, with Heber, the suspicion of his having been a cold or indifferent husband and father; and a modern writer had no authority for affirming that he never speaks of the female sex but in terms of contempt, and selects from their history the most copious examples of physical and intellectual weakness. Such criticism is the result of a superficial acquaintance with his works, and may be easily disproved. "I believe," he wrote, "some wives have been the best friends in the world;"<sup>1</sup> and again—"In peaceful times, virtuous women are the beauties of society, and the prettinesses of friendship."<sup>2</sup>

His general estimate of the female character corresponded with Milton's; to nurse their children, overlook the affairs of the household, visit poor cottages, and comfort the sick; to be humble and courteous, learning in silence of their husbands or spiritual guides, and reading good books; praying often, and speaking little;—these formed the chief duties which he thought that women of the highest birth and fortune were obliged to fulfil.<sup>3</sup> The maternal affection was to have in it something severe; children, he said, "prove fools and troublesome so long as the feminine republic does endure;"<sup>4</sup> and he

<sup>1</sup> A Discourse on Friendship.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. See also Prayer to be said before Marriage at the end of the Golden Grove.

<sup>3</sup> Holy Living, chap. i. sec. 1, and Sermon xii.

<sup>4</sup> Holy Dying, chap. iii. sec. 6.



commends Lady Carbery, because, "as a mother, she was careful and prudent, very tender, and not at all fond; a greater lover of her children's souls than of their bodies, and one that could value them more by the strict rules of honour and proper worth, than by their relation to herself."<sup>1</sup>

In the patriarchal state and authority of the master of a family, the resemblance to Milton may likewise be recognised: he delineates him, living sweetly with his wife and affectionately with his children, "providently and discreetly with his servants; and they all love the major-domo, and look upon him as their parent, their guardian, their patron, their friend."<sup>2</sup> That his rule would be free from tyranny and moroseness, the humility and meekness of his disposition offer a sufficient guarantee; and in the Worthy Communicant, he enforces the necessity of abstaining from the slightest beginning of a domestic war, by sweet counsels, tender reproofs, and oblivion of little inconveniences; "charity at home, and a peaceable society in a family, being the first of all public unions." His sermon on Marriage breathes the gentleness and fervour of true affection, and may be bound up with Spenser's Epithalamium, or Milton's description of holy love in Eden.

"'Tis no paradox," was the remark of Evelyn, "that a man may be learned and know but little, and that the greatest clerks are not always the

<sup>1</sup> See her funeral sermon.

<sup>2</sup> Great Exemplar, xv.

wisest men." The name of Chrysostom might point the moral. Of him it has been said, that his character wanted the peculiar, and perhaps inconsistent, qualifications requisite for his position,—that he was the preacher, not the man of the world.<sup>1</sup> But a knowledge of man and habits of business are not incompatible with the brightest fancy, or the deepest philosophy. Spenser wrote a practical book upon Ireland, and Rubens conducted a successful embassy to the English court. Genius may disdain common life, but is never unequal to it; if, like the Grecian sculptor, its favourite material be ivory, it knows also how to work in brass. The exceptions of literary history are unimportant; the sequesterment of Gray, or the bashfulness of Sander-son, were peculiarities of constitution, not of intellect. Who can read the works of Hooker without recognising the liveliness and accuracy of his observation?

This earth, 'was the saying of a reflective and devout man, is made for action, not fruition.<sup>2</sup> Taylor's estimate of it corresponded with his contemporary's, and he tells us of Bramhall, with evident approbation, that he was a man of great business and resort, and ready to advise his brethren as well as to admonish them. He kept the active in subordination to the devotional duties of the Christian. "Our bishop, with reverend Andrewes, meddled little with civil affairs, being out of his pro-

<sup>1</sup> Milman's History of Christianity, iii. 219.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Hall; Contemplations; Death of Moses.

fession and element. Heaven is his vocation, and therefore he counts earthly employments avocations."<sup>1</sup> The example of Andrewes was in his eye; and his loveliest visions of rapturous piety seem never to have weakened his judgment, or relaxed his energy.

Of his political opinions we have many indications; they were naturally in favour of that authority and those institutions for which he pleaded so eloquently, and suffered so much. In what light the friends of the monarchy were disposed to view the leaders of the rebellion, we may discover from Cowley's portrait of Cromwell; and Taylor evidently looked with sympathetic admiration on the genius of the king's most gifted minister, and the melancholy fate of his proudest bishop. Speaking of the machinations against Bramhall, he remarked, that his enemies accused him of designs to subvert the fundamental laws, "the way by which great Strafford and Canterbury fell."<sup>2</sup>

The occasional extravagance of his praise ought not to be permitted to impugn the general dignity and independence of his character. Flattery was the characteristic of that age, as it had been of the preceding. It is a note soon acquired; and it chimed upon the ear of Taylor from the lips of his eminent predecessors. Archbishop Sandys had spoken of Elizabeth as "not inferior to Mithridates

<sup>1</sup> Fuller; the Holy State.

<sup>2</sup> Funeral Sermon on Bramhall.

for diversity of languages,"<sup>1</sup> and concentrating in her own person the miscellaneous virtues of our princes, from the first Edward to the sixth Henry.<sup>2</sup> Whitgift, who once rebuked the queen with Christian courage, disgraced himself, at the Hampton Court controversy, by ascribing to James the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and Bancroft crawled after him in a posture of equal degradation. The brave spirit of Donne was infected by the contagion; and he prophesied of the same monarch, at Paul's Cross, that posterity would revere him for a classic father, "such a father as Ambrose or Austin was."<sup>3</sup> The poetical temperament was not alone susceptible of the disease. The learned and cautious Pearson added his name to an absurd eulogy of the Duchess of Newcastle. The law emulated the church; and even Montague might find his parallel in Bacon.

But Taylor was no common panegyrist. He touched nothing without ennobling it; and from his pen, as from Titian's pencil, a beggar would have risen the patriarch of want, and a musqueteer, the hero of Thermopylæ. Like Spenser and Dryden, he knew how to kindle flattery into its fairest splendour. Elizabeth is not transformed more beautifully into the Faery Queen, than Lady Carbery is illuminated into the Saint. He escaped from the inconvenience supposed by Swift to be inseparable from praise; and no pane-

<sup>1</sup> Sermons, Cantic. iv. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1 Tim. ii.

<sup>3</sup> Sermon clv.

gyric in our own, nor perhaps in any foreign tongue, has a slighter infusion of poppy.

Heber denies to Taylor the endowment of musical taste, and compares what he calls his reluctant admission of organs into churches, with Milton's glowing delight in their tones. He had forgotten a remarkable outburst of affectionate feeling, in the third chapter of the *Christian Consolations*.<sup>1</sup> After mentioning the joyfulness and alacrity of the religious spirit, he refers to the Jewish belief, that the merrier the heart is in the Lord, the more its capacity of receiving divine influence is quickened and enlarged. He instances Miriam, who accompanied her prophecies with the timbrel; and dwells especially upon the command of Elisha, when consulted by Jehoshaphat—"Bring me a minstrel; and it came to pass that when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him." That by the ravishing strains of music his mind might be exalted into heavenly contemplation, which is a great check to that drowsy dulness in devotion which our late reformers have brought in, and have excluded the solemn melody of the organ, and the raptures of warbling and sweet voices out of cathedral choirs. They that miss that harmony can best tell how it was wont to raise up their spirit, and, as it were, to carry it out of them into the choir in heaven."<sup>2</sup> Surely, the cold permission, of which Heber speaks,

<sup>1</sup> Works of Taylor, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Works ed. Heber, i. 124.

will not be found in a passage burning with all the poetry and tenderness of Milton. It breathes, indeed, the thought of the *Penseroso*:—

“There let the pealing organ blow,  
To the full-voiced quire below,  
In service high and anthem clear,  
As may with sweetness through mine ear,  
Dissolve me into ecstasies,  
And bring all heaven before my eyes.”

One represents the power of sacred music, in lifting the hearer out of earthly thoughts into the choir of angels; the other shows it in bringing down the vision of glory, and changing the house of prayer into the gate of heaven. It was not, indeed, so much Taylor who differed from Milton, as Milton who differed from himself, when, in his darker hour of bigotry, he denounced the anthems and beauty of those cathedrals which once he had frequented and loved, and spat all the venom of puritanical rancour “upon the painted copes and chanted service-book of the church.”

Taylor had a practical knowledge of music; and he sometimes introduced an illustration from it, with something of the singular effect that marks Milton’s astronomical allusions. One example is very noticeable:—“As in an accurate song, you must keep minim time, or else you will put the whole choir out, so look that you sing the new song of the Lord with trembling and accurate observation; miss neither clef nor note, that is,



neither sound doctrine nor pious practice.”<sup>1</sup> In the passage of the *Ductor Dubitantium*,<sup>2</sup> where, he treats of this subject, he does not mention the organ—the Greek word *οργανον*, which he translates from Justin Martyr, signifying any musical instrument whatever. He regards instrumental music as a help to psalmody, but objects to make it a circumstance of the divine service. Nor will this conditional approval surprise us, if we remember the account given by Erasmus of English churches at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when elaborate and theatrical harmonies were accompanied by a tumultuous diversity of voices, and the ear was stunned by “trumpets, cornets, pipes, and singing;”<sup>3</sup> when people came to “church as to a playhouse,” and the choir and the flock divided the oversight of the bishop.

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Consolations*, Works, i. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Works, xiv. 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Annotations on the New Testament*; Wordsworth’s *Ecclesiastical Biography*, i. 171, (*Note*.) It sometimes happens that Taylor’s musical predilections lead him into a very unfortunate illustration; as in the following passage, where, speaking of the efficiency of prayer, he says—“The Spirit of Christ is the precentor or rector chori—the master of the choir.”—*Return of Prayers*, Part ii.

## CHAPTER XIV.

- I. The cultivation of the rhetorical mind. — II. Taylor's reading in English poetry — Spenser. — III. Artistic decorations of style—Poussin. — IV. Universality of his genius; examples of the terrible. — V. Compared with Thomson; Southey. — VI. Dramatic vividness of his imagery; representation of Time. — VII. His poetical remains.

CICERO believed that the abundant harvest of eloquence can only be reaped by him, whose mind is sown with the seed of all sciences, and cultivated by every beautiful art. It is knowledge that blossoms into rhetoric. Of the acquirements of Taylor, his surviving friend<sup>1</sup> speaks with zealous admiration. He notices his familiarity with the Greek and Latin Fathers, the sophistries of the schoolmen, and the elegances of classical oratory, poetry, and ethics. The "refined wits of the later ages," the quaint exaggeration of French fiction, and the more graceful gaiety of Italian fancy, were also known to him; he mentions the Grand Cyrus, and makes an unfortunate quotation from Poggio. To the genius of Dante he could scarcely have been a

<sup>1</sup> See the Sermon of Rust.

stranger; and we are reminded of the dark picturings of the Purgatory and Inferno in his own appalling delineations of the suffering sinner, tormented by a melancholy confusion of seasons, and plunging from regions of fire into eternal frost.

His reading in English poetry seems to have been confined within narrower limits than the other branches of his studies. We look in vain for any reference to Spenser; yet to what author was his eye more likely to be drawn? When he took his bachelor's degree at Cambridge, little more than thirty years were passed since the concluding canto of the Faery Queen appeared with wide and spreading applause; becoming the delight and model of the minstrel and the knight; a book of piety for the old, and a picture-gallery for the young. A kindred spirit seemed to beckon him to the page. If Cowper, looking back in the grey evening of a late autumn of fancy, remembered the rude Spenser of the people,<sup>1</sup> the

“ Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale  
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail ;”

we might have expected to see Taylor stooping, with a gentler reverence, over the changeful lights and colours of that allegory through which Christian virtue is conducted, by the Spenser of all time, to its heaven of promise and crown of victory.

Heber makes several ingenious remarks upon what he calls Taylor's indiscriminate appetite for

<sup>1</sup> Bunyan.

the marvellous, and quotes his allusion to the alabaster and golden houses of Egyptian Thebes, and the magnificent city of Quinsay, with its eighty millions of inhabitants. The “undoubting mind” of the poet believes much; and Gray lost his identity in the “Bard” when he composed it. This is the credulity of the imagination, not of the understanding. The wonderful embellishments of Taylor resemble the enchantments of Ariosto, or the combats of Spenser; they are picturesque circumstances—artifices of colour. Like the crimson curtain of the painter, he introduces them to soften or to decorate the picture. When Wood said that he was esteemed a complete artist, he unconsciously presented us with a key to the imperfections, as well as to the beauties of his style. His classical illustrations are generally perfect landscapes; and he uses old words to dignify a metaphor, as Poussin gave a nobler air to a figure by his familiarity with antique proportions. His inharmonious combinations of imagery might be defended by similar eccentricities in the highest art; while the occasional intermixture of serious truths with familiar images, reminds us of the wild and melancholy humour of Holbein. Perhaps the following passages present this peculiarity of manner in the most striking light. He is speaking of the afflictions of the saints, as emblematic of the sufferings of Jesus Christ:—“It is he who is stoned in Stephen, flayed in the person of St. Bartholomew; he was roasted upon St. Laurence’s grid-iron, exposed to lions in St. Ignatius, burnt in

St. Polycarp, frozen in the lake where stood forty martyrs of Cappadocia.”<sup>1</sup> And again, with homeliness more debasing: “We shall dishonour the sufferings and redemption of our blessed Saviour, if we think them to be an umbrella to shelter impious and ungodly living.”<sup>2</sup> The richest productions of the Italian and German art frequently startle the eye of taste, with improprieties of association not less remarkable; and angels are seen tuning musical instruments in a modern orchestra; the painter, like Durer, introduces himself, in a fur mantle, among a group of blessed spirits.

It is the custom, even among educated persons, to describe Taylor as a copious and florid writer, in whom the luxuriance and debility of the Asiatic school are conspicuously combined. Thus the affluence of his fancy has helped to impoverish his reputation, and the wing that raised him to the sun furnishes the arrow to bring him to the earth. In every large and fruitful intellect, we undoubtedly trace the predominance of one particular faculty; whether it be sagacity in Thucydides, beauty in Virgil, or harmony in Raffaele. But this domination of one habit of thought does not imply the extirpation of every other. The historian becomes the rival of Demosthenes, the poet hurls the thunder-cloud over his garden, and the painter towers into the full grandeur and height of passion. We couple Michael Angelo with Æschylus, without remember-

<sup>1</sup> Sermons ; Faith and Patience of the Saints.

<sup>2</sup> The Invalidity of a Death-bed Repentance.

ing that Sophocles may be included in the parallel; or that the pencil, which seemed to exult in the creation of magnificent and daring energy, could impart to its design the tranquillity and bloom of Correggio.

And so it is with Taylor. The ruling faculty of his mind was a love of the beautiful, but he possessed, in an eminent degree, the element of the terrible. His works afford innumerable examples, but four will be sufficient. The impenitent sinner, passing out of life, "appears with a spirit amazed and confounded to be seen among the angels of light, with the shadows of the works of darkness upon him."<sup>1</sup> The eternity of torment is "a continued stroke, which neither shortens the life, nor introduces a brawny patience, but is the same in every instant, and great as the first stroke of lightning."<sup>2</sup> His Treatise on Repentance is pervaded by a still and solemnizing gloom. "And now the sin is chosen and loved, it is pleasant and easy, and by these steps the sinner enters within the iron gates of death, which are sealed against his return by a sad decree."<sup>3</sup> And speaking of the penitence of Augustin, he portrays "the horrible fears of damnation hourly beating upon his spirit, with the wings of horror and affrightment."<sup>4</sup>

A lively taste for the beautiful and attractive will frequently manifest its presence in pictures of a

<sup>1</sup> Holy Dying, ch. v. sect. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Christ's Advent to Judgment, pt. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Unum Necessarium, c. v.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



sombre and affecting character; and the gaiety of the pencil become apparent in the representation of agony. Rubens illustrates this error. In the "Adoration of the Magi," and the "Crucifixion," he made the hue of the draperies equally brilliant. In poetry and eloquence, we may admit, in the phrase of art, that the colouring of Spenser and Taylor is too much tinted. Everywhere the warm and sunny imagination diffuses its rays. The constraint of metre seems only to impede the graceful motion of his language. Southey transferred to Thalaba a short passage from the sermon on the Wedding Ring, with very slight alterations of what he styles the Bishop's unimprovable diction; yet the prose is more poetical than the lyrical adaptation. Nor will a rural scene, already quoted<sup>1</sup> from the Holy Living, lose any of its charm by a comparison with an exquisite stanza of Thomson, which may have been suggested by it:

"I care not, Fortune, what you me deny;  
 You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace;  
 You cannot shut the windows of the sky,  
 Through which Aurora shows her bright'ning face.  
 You cannot bar my constant feet to trace  
 The woods and lawns, by living streams, at eve;  
 Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,  
 And I their toys to the great children leave,  
 Of fancy, reason, virtue nought can me bereave."<sup>2</sup>

Nor should we forget to observe in the imagery of Taylor, a dramatic distinctness and unity of im-

<sup>1</sup> Page 126.

<sup>2</sup> Castle of Indolence.

pression, which are not often seen except in the works of the greatest masters—particularly in our own Shakspeare. A striking instance occurs in the *Holy Dying*.<sup>1</sup> “All the successions of time, all the changes in nature, all the varieties of light and darkness, the thousand thousands of accidents in the world, and every contingency to every man, and to every creature, doth preach our funeral sermon, and calls us to look and see how the old sexton Time throws up the earth and digs a grave, where we must lay our sins or our sorrows, and sow our bodies, till they rise again in a fair or an intolerable eternity.” With this image, filling the mind and eye, compare an admirable passage by Donne.<sup>2</sup> “The ashes of an oak in the chimney are no epitaph of that oak, to tell me how high, or how large that was. It tells me not what flocks it sheltered while it stood, nor what men it hurt when it fell. The dust of great persons’ graves is speechless too,—it says nothing, it distinguishes nothing. As soon the dust of a wretch whom thou wouldst not, as of a prince whom thou couldst not look upon, would trouble thine eyes if the wind blew it thither; and when a whirlwind hath blown the dust of a churchyard into the church, and the man sweeps out the dust of the church into the churchyard, who will undertake to sift those dusts again, and to pronounce, This is the patrician, this is the noble flour; and this the yeomanly—this the plebeian

<sup>1</sup> Chapter i. sect. 1.<sup>2</sup> Preached March 8, 1628.

bran." Coleridge added a brief but expressive—  
 "Very beautiful indeed!"<sup>1</sup>

"I could not but smile," Taylor wrote to Evelyn, "at my own weaknesses, and very much love the sweetness and candour of your nature, that you were pleased to endure my English poetry; but I could not be removed from my certain knowledge of my greatest weaknesses in it." He was right; in verse he had only the use of his left hand; his poetry is to be sought in his prose; yet in these lines we discover the fervour of Crashaw, with some of the fancy of Cowley:—

"O beauteous God, uncircumscribed treasure  
 Of an eternal pleasure,  
 Thy throne is settled far  
 Above the highest star,  
 Where thou prepar'st a glorious place  
 Within the brightness of thy face,  
 For every spirit  
 To inherit,  
 That builds his hope upon thy merit,  
 And loves thee with a holy charity.  
 What ravish'd heart, seraphic tongue or eyes  
 Clear as the mornings rise,  
 Can speak, or think, or see,  
 That bright eternity?  
 Where the great King's transparent throne  
 Is of an entire jasper stone;  
 There the eye  
 O' the chrysolite,  
 And a sky

---

<sup>1</sup> The Editor of his Remains compares the passage with Hamlet, Act v. sect. 1.

Of diamonds, rubies, chrysophrase.  
And, above all, thy holy face  
Makes an eternal clarity.  
When thou thy jewels up dost bind,—that day  
    Remember us, we pray,—  
    That where the beryl lies  
    And the crystal 'bove the skies,  
There thou mayst appoint us place  
Within the brightness of thy face ;  
    And our soul  
    In the scroll  
Of life and blissfulness enrol,  
That we may praise thee to eternity."

The second hymn for Advent swells upon the  
ear with a fuller melody:—

    " Lord, come away ;  
    Why dost thou stay ?  
Thy road is ready ; and thy paths made straight,  
    With longing expectation wait  
The consecration of thy beauteous feet.  
Ride on triumphantly : behold, we lay  
Our lusts and proud wills in thy way.  
Hosannah ! welcome to our hearts : Lord, here  
Thou hast a temple too, and full as dear  
As that of Sion ; and as full of sin ;—  
Nothing but thieves and robbers dwell therein.  
Enter, and chase them forth, and cleanse the floor ;  
Crucify them that they may never more  
    Profane thy holy place,  
    Where thou hast set thy face.  
And then, if our stiff tongues shall be  
Mute in the praises of thy deity,  
    The stones out of the temple-wall  
    Shall cry aloud and call  
Hosannah ! and thy glorious footsteps greet."

There is sweetness, as well as music in this stanza, from a penitential hymn:—

But thou, my God, hast blood in store,  
 And art the Patron of the poor.  
     Yet since the balsam of thy blood,  
     Although it can, will do no good,  
 Unless the wounds be cleansed with tears before ;  
     Thou, in whose sweet, but pensive face,  
     Laughter could never steal a place,  
     Teach but my heart and eyes  
         To melt away,  
 And then one drop of balsam will suffice.

And in the Prayer for Charity, we observe an ease in the flow, and an engaging naturalness in the expression, which show us that practice would have imparted excellence:

“ Full of mercy, full of love,  
 Look upon us from above ,  
 Thou, who taught'st the blind man's sight  
 To entertain a double light,  
 Thine and the day's (and that thine too) ;  
 The lame away his crutches threw ;  
 The parched crust of leprosy  
 Return'd unto its infancy ;  
 The dumb amazed was to hear  
 His own unchain'd tongue strike his ear.  
 Thy powerful mercy did even chase  
 The devil from his usurped place,  
 Where thou thyself shouldst dwell, not he ;  
 O let thy love our pattern be ;  
 Let thy mercy teach one brother  
 To forgive and love another ;  
 That copying thy mercy here,  
 Thy goodness may hereafter rear  
 Our souls unto thy glory, when  
 Our dust shall cease to be with men.”

## CHAPTER XV.

- I. Taylor regarded as a preacher ; Hooker, Hall, Donne, and Hammond. — II. His Sermons examined ; their style. Mr. Hallam's opinion of their merits. — III. His illustrations from History. — IV. Embellishment of Fancy. — V. Divine beauty of his delineations of the Saviour. — VI. His discourses on the last Judgment, compared with Michael Angelo. — VII. His obligations to Sir John Hayward. — Illustrative Specimens. — Sublimity.

THE most natural classification of Taylor's works would arrange them in four divisions,—practical, devotional, controversial, and casuistical. But his sermons claim a separate examination, whether we consider their dignity, originality, or success. Rust's allusion to his sweet and pleasant air is the only contemporary memorial of his preaching that has come down to us. In the wisdom of experience and thought he cautioned the clergy, not to suffer the love of their congregations to degenerate into popularity;<sup>1</sup> but the legitimate advantages of elocu-

<sup>1</sup> Rules and Advices to the Clergy of Down and Connor. In the Great Exemplar (Works iii. 287,) he observes, "A good name may give us opportunity of persuading others in their duty, especially in an age when men choose their doctrines by the men that preach them."



tion and manner he was not likely to overlook; since one of his own classical friends<sup>1</sup> had taught him, how powerfully the voice and countenance of the speaker concur in fixing an argument or admonition upon the hearer.

The history of an illustrious predecessor added a forcible commentary. The judgment of the multitude proclaimed the inferiority of Hooker to Travers. Walton exhibits him in the pulpit of the Temple Church, his eyes turned steadfastly in one direction, and appearing to study as he spoke. Fuller mentions his want of graceful and significant pronounciation and gesture, but confesses that he made good music without resin. Donne, on the contrary, brought every aid of oratory to the service of truth, and we are assured by one who often heard him, that the congregation might take notes from his look and hand. The style of Taylor was, in a large degree, susceptible of these imparted graces.

The eminent preachers of the seventeenth century did not read their sermons, but committed them to memory, after the most laborious preparation. This precaution was not confined to great towns, or academic audiences. Hall preached three times in a week at Waltham, without ever venturing, as he tells us, to climb up into the pulpit, until he had previously penned every word in the same order in which he hoped to deliver it; although

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, B. ii. Letter 3.

with regard to the expression, he "listed not to be the slave of syllables." To Fuller, and those who enjoyed a lively faculty of verbal retention, the task was not severe; but upon men of weaker memory it entailed considerable toil. This was the case with Hammond, though the constitutional impediment yielded to his perseverance and zeal, and Charles the First declared him to be the most natural orator he had ever heard. In a later day, the fluency of Sprat revived the popular attraction of a more intellectual school. The clear rapidity of the stream diverted the eye from its shallowness. Evelyn says that his talent was in a great memory, which enabled him to dispense with notes.

Some of the characteristics of Taylor's pulpit addresses have been noticed in a former page. They frequently remind us of the poetry and architecture of the earlier part of that century in which they appeared. The stiffness is forgotten in the solemnity that pervades the whole. If we open a volume of old theology immediately after closing one of modern date, the sensation is extremely pleasurable. We escape from the gaudy flower-plots and shrubberies, into the stately and embowered walks, statued terraces, fruitful walls, and marble fountains of a more picturesque and meditative nature. Whatever be the eccentricities of construction or embellishment, we feel that they involved an outlay of study and wealth, which newer methods do not require.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The late Mr. Taylor, of Norwich, the friend of Southey, has somewhere made a similar remark.

Hallam, whose largesses of praise are seldom scattered with prodigality among our elder divines, pronounces Taylor to be the greatest ornament of the English pulpit up to the middle of the seventeenth century, and believes that he had no competitor in foreign countries. The second part of the criticism is indisputable. The French school of rhetoric was only rising; the literary history of Bossuet, Bourdaloue, and La Rue belongs to a period subsequent to the death of Taylor. But I know not why his pre-eminence is to be restricted by chronology. He was not less the glory of our church at the end of the century, than at the beginning. Barrow and South followed him; but who will lower his seat, or rather, who will venture to raise their chairs to his throne? He had everything that was theirs, with something that was inseparably his own. In all his sermons, the exulting course of his genius is perceptible, communicating warmth and beauty on every side, and through all the intricacies of casuistry and learning,

“Trailing an arched variety of light.”

In the pulpit, as in the closet, he fulfils the definition of eloquence, and speaks to the understanding, while he interests the affections.<sup>1</sup> The copious felicity of his illustrations cannot be unobserved by the hastiest inspection. He reads everything, and makes it useful; from the *Æneid*

<sup>1</sup> Pascal, *Pensées*, cv.

to Entomology, and the Council of Trent to the Buccaneers. Perhaps we should better appreciate the results of his research, if we reflected upon the difficulties of conducting or supplying it, when the paucity of new books was equalled by their costliness. It has been remarked of Hooker, that he quotes even foreign works within a very short time after their publication. Taylor, if at wider intervals, does the same thing; and always introduces historical explanations with ingenuity and aptness. Such is the account of the saint triumphant over the calamities and trials of persecution and hatred:

“And when persecution hews a man down from a large fortune to an even one, or from thence to the face of the earth, or from thence to the grave; a good man is but preparing for a crown, and the tyrant does but first knock off the fetters of the soul, the manacles of passion and desire, sensual loves and lower appetites; and if God suffers him to finish the persecution, then he can but dismantle the soul’s prison, and let the soul fly to the mountains of rest; and all the intermediate evils are but like the Persian punishments; the executioner tore off their hairs, and rent their silken mantles, and discomposed their curious dressings, and lightly touched the skin; yet the offender cried out with most bitter exclamations, while his fault was expiated with a ceremony and without blood. So does God to his servants; he rends their

<sup>1</sup> The Faith and Patience of the Saints, pt. iii.

upper garments, and strips them of their unnecessary wealth, and ties them to physic and salutary discipline; and they cry out under usages which have nothing but the outward sense and opinion of evil, not the real substance."

Equally curious is the picture of superstition, under its innumerable lights and shades of manifestation:—"Almost all ages of the world have observed many instances of fond persuasions and foolish practices, proceeding from violent fears and scruples in matter of religion. Diomedon and many other captains were condemned to die, because, after a great naval victory, they pursued the flying enemies, and did not first bury their dead. But Chabrias, in the same case, first buried the dead, and by that time the enemy rallied, and returned, and his navy, and made his masters pay the price of their importune superstition: they feared where they should not, and where they did not, they should. From hence proceeds observation of signs and unlucky days; and the people did so when the Gregorian account began, continuing to call those unlucky days which were so signified in their tradition or *erra pater*, although the day upon this account fell ten days sooner; and men were transported with many other trifling contingencies and little accidents: which when they are once entertained by weakness, prevail upon their own strength, and in sad natures and weak spirits have produced effects of great danger and sorrow. Aristodemus, king of the Messenians, in his war against the

Spartans, prevented the sword of the enemy by a violence done upon himself, only because his dogs howled like wolves; and the soothsayers were afraid, because the briony grew up by the walls of his father's house; and Nicias, general of the Athenian forces, sat with his arms in his bosom, and suffered himself and forty thousand men tamely to fall by the insolent enemy, only because he was afraid of the labouring and eclipsed moon. When the marble statues in Rome did sweat (as naturally they did against all rainy weather) the augurs gave an alarm to the city; but if lightning struck the spire of the Capitol, they thought the sum of affairs, and the commonwealth itself, was endangered. And this heathen folly hath stuck so close to the Christians, that all the sermons of the church for sixteen hundred years have not cured them all; but the practices of weaker people, and the artifice of ruling priests, have superinduced many new ones. When Pope Eugenius sang mass at Rheims, and some few drops from the chalice were spilt upon the pavement, it was thought to foretell mischief, wars and bloodshed to all Christendom, though it was nothing but carelessness and mischance of the priest; and because Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, sang the mass of requiem upon the day he was reconciled to his prince, it was thought to foretell his own death by that religious office."<sup>1</sup>

The fairest revelation of Taylor's fancy will undoubtedly be found in those works which he de-

<sup>1</sup> Of Godly Fear, pt. iii.



signed for the private encouragement and edification of the Christian, especially his Holy Living and Dying, and the Great Exemplar; but his sermons shine with rays of the same splendour, though the sun be lower behind the hills. The sorrows and weariness of the pilgrim to heaven are the never-ending theme of his solicitude and consolations. He changes the world into a garden once more, by planting in it the Tree of Life, and showing to the way-faring stranger how, from every far-spreading bough of immortality and hope, it throws up into

“—— darkest gloom

Of neighb’ring cypress, or more sable yew,  
Its silver globes.”

His exquisite sense of the poetry of nature and all rural objects, accompanies him into the pulpit; and, like the purest pencil of ancient art, he leads the troubled eye from the agony and darkness of the martyrdom, to the serene landscape in the distance,—its quiet trees and purple air. We have a specimen in his argument that true happiness resides in few desires, slumbering passions, and wants easily provided for.

“For as it is in plants which nature voluntarily thrusts forth, she makes regular provisions, and dresses them with strength and ornament, with easiness and full stature; but if you thrust a jessamine there where she would have had a daisy grow, or bring the tall fir from dwelling in his own country, and transport the orange or the almond-tree near the fringes of the north star,

nature is displeased, and becomes unnatural, and starves her sucklings, and renders you a return less than your charge and expectation; so it is in all our appetites; when they are natural and proper, nature feeds them and makes them healthful and lusty, as the coarse issue of the Scythian clown; she feeds them and makes them easy without cares and costly passion; but if you thrust an appetite into her which she intended not, she gives you sickly and uneasy banquets; you must struggle with her for every drop of milk she gives beyond her own needs; you may get gold from her entrails, and at a great price provide ornaments for your queens, and princely women; but our lives are spent in the purchase; and when you have got them, you must have more, for these cannot content you, nor nourish the spirit.”<sup>1</sup>

Coleridge, and other writers less distinguished, have complained of Taylor’s occasional and imperfect references to the scheme of Redemption, and the Divine Author and Finisher of the Faith which applies it. But if there be one feature in his sermons more remarkable than another, it is the chaste and loving reverence with which he delineates the character and attributes of Jesus Christ upon earth, in his relation to the human family. The diadem of heaven is round his head, and the compassion of the dying friend in his eye. In one place it is written—“And, therefore, he came, not in the spirit of Elias, but with meekness and gentle insinuations,

<sup>1</sup> The House of Feasting, pt. i.

mild as the breath of heaven, not willing to disturb the softest stalk of a violet.”<sup>1</sup> And again, in a higher strain of sublimity and tenderness:—

“All that Christ came for, was, or was mingled with, suffering; for all those little joys which God sent, either to recreate his person, or to illustrate his office, were abated or attended with afflictions; God being more careful to establish in him the covenant of sufferings, than to refresh his sorrows. Presently after the angels had finished their hallelujahs, he was forced to fly to save his life; and the air became full of shrieks of the desolate mothers of Bethlehem for their dying babes. God had no sooner made him illustrious with a voice from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him in the waters of baptism, but he was delivered over to be tempted and assaulted by the devil in the wilderness. His transfiguration was a bright ray of glory; but then also he entered into a cloud, and was told a sad story what he was to suffer at Jerusalem. And upon Palm Sunday, when he rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and was adorned with the acclamations of a King and a God, he wet the palms with his tears, sweeter than the drops of manna, or the little pearls of heaven that descended upon Mount Hermon; weeping in the midst of this triumph over obstinate, perishing, and malicious Jerusalem. For this Jesus was like the rainbow, which God set in the clouds as a sacrament to confirm a promise, and establish a grace; he was half made of the glories of the light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; in

<sup>1</sup> Of Godly Fear, pt. i.

his best days he was but half triumph and half sorrow; he was sent to tell of his Father's mercies, and that God intended to spare us; but appeared not but in the company, or in the retinue of a shower, and of foul weather. But I need not tell that Jesus, beloved of God, was a suffering person: that which concerns this question most, is, that he made for us a covenant of sufferings; his doctrines were such as expressly and by consequent enjoin and suppose sufferings, and a state of affliction; his very promises were sufferings; his beatitudes were sufferings; his rewards, and his arguments to invite men to follow him, were only taken from sufferings in this life, and the reward of sufferings hereafter."<sup>1</sup>

In literature, as in art, there is no perfect and independent originality; intimacy with the invention of others gives it to ourselves; every *Æneid* is an expansion or modification of an *Iliad*. The most successful have always been the most imitative. Rubens surrounded his pencil with medals and drawings; Raffaele studied the heads of Durer; and M. Angelo borrowed the expression of some figures in his "Last Judgment" from the old fresco of Orgagna, at Pisa. Gray never attempted to compose a stanza, until he had excited his imagination with a canto of Spenser. What is true of poetry or painting, is also true of theology. Taylor's excursive reading guided him into the remotest and wildest seclusions of literature, consecrated by their associations, or overgrown by time. Old books, or

<sup>1</sup> The Faith and Patience of the Saints, pt. i.

neglected authors, were his medals and frescos; and it is interesting to see the skill with which he imparts grace to the rude outline, or brilliancy to the faded colour. It is Milton illuminating Sylvester. His splendid sermons on Doomsday Book, and Christ's Advent to Judgment, were obviously elaborated with more than common industry; the picture grew out of many sketches; and he found his Orgagna in Sir John Hayward.

Hayward was a lawyer who flourished in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and whose theological attainments exceeded his legal erudition. He forms the subject of one of Bacon's apothegms, in which Elizabeth inquires whether his *Life of Henry IV.* contained any treason. "No," was the reply, "but a great deal of felony, for he has stolen many of his sentences out of Tacitus." Hayward was acknowledged by his contemporaries to possess "a good, clean pen, and smooth style;" but they objected to his melodramatic exaggeration and bombast. The work, in which it is suggested that Taylor may have found suggestions for his picture, is entitled the *Sanctuary of a Troubled Soul*, published in 1607. It is written with energy,—but a comparison of a few passages with Taylor's paraphrases will confirm the saying of Pascal, that thoughts, of a sickly leaf and faint blossom in their native beds, become verdant and blooming, if transplanted into a kindlier soil and a sunnier climate:

The outlines of description in Taylor and Hayward are nearly the same. We recognise in both

the prisoners, the Judge, the sentence, and the three-fold accusation,—of Christ, who has been rejected; of conscience, which has been wounded; of the devil, who has been obeyed. The awful audience in that flaming theatre, where the drama of life vanishes in its fearful catastrophe, is represented by Taylor with wonderful force. He crowds into it all the worlds that Cæsar taxed; the armies that perished beneath the Roman eagle; the saints who lived to exhort, and the martyrs who died to animate us; the believers of Nineveh; the men of Capernaum; the Queen of the South. But I am not certain that by this strange variety of wretchedness, he has excelled the simple grandeur of Hayward's exhibition of the one, isolated, forsaken sinner, brought forth naked and alone, and led up through those ghastly multitudes, to appear before the judgment-seat of the Redeemer.

## TAYLOR.

“And so it shall be at the day of judgment, when that world and this, and all that shall be born hereafter, shall pass through the same red sea, and be all baptized with the same fire, and be involved in the same cloud, in which shall be thunders and terrors infinite; every man's fear shall be increased by his neighbour's shrieks; and the amazement that all the world shall be in, shall unite as the

## HAYWARD.

“Woe to me wretch! What shall I doe in that day, that great day, that day of fury and of feare, when an universall flood of fire shall overstreame the whole world, and consume both the beauty and glory thereof into nothing?—when, at the sound of the trumpet, all graves shall open and yeeld up their prisoners, which they have kept fast fettered in the chains of death, from all ages since the world



## TAYLOR.

sparks of a raging furnace into a globe of fire, and roll upon its own principle, and increase by direct appearances and intolerable reflections.\*\* And at doomsday, when the terrors are universal, besides that it is itself so much greater because it can affright the whole world, it is also made greater by communication and a sorrowful influence; grief being, then, strongly infectious, when there is no variety of state, but an entire kingdom of fear; and amazement is the king of all our passions, and all the world its subjects. And that shriek must needs be terrible, when millions of men and women, at the same instant, shall fearfully cry out, and the noise shall mingle with the trumpet of the archangel, with the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens, and the crack of the dissolving world; when the whole fabric of nature shall shake into dissolution and eternal ashes. But this general consideration may be heightened with four or five circumstances. Consider what an infinite multitude of angels and men and women shall appear: it is a huge assembly,

## HAYWARD.

was made; when the soule of every sinner, at the approach unto the body, shall cry out with curses against it, because that to please such a loathsome lump of carrion and dung it hath incurred inestimable both damage and pain; when the body again shall entertaine and welcome the soul with a cruell curse, that it would be abused by such base pleasures to the irreparable ruine of them both; when with such salutations they shall knit together, not as companions, but as enemies, not as helpers, but as persecutors and tormentors, not as one the habitation of the other, but as the prison, the fetters, the snare to endure perpetually the full weight of God's justice together; when the bookes of every man's naked conscience shall bee layde forth, and thereout a long processe drawne against them; when all the sinnes which ever I committed from my birth to my buriall shall bee summoned to appeare against mee, and all my actions, wordes, and thoughts, even those which I most esteemed either concealed or else forgotten, shall bee set in

## TAYLOR.

when the men of one kingdom, the men of one age in a single province, are gathered together into heaps of confusion and disorder; but then, all kingdoms of all ages, all the armics that ever mustered, all the world that Augustus Cæsar taxed, all those hundreds of millions that were slain in all the Roman wars, from Numa's time till Italy was broken into principalities and small exarchates; all these, and all that can come into numbers, and that did descend from the loins of Adam, shall at once be represented.

\* \* \* \*

We may consider that this infinite multitude of men, women, angels, and devils, is not ineffective as a number in Pythagoras's tables, but must needs have influence upon every spirit that shall there appear. For the transactions of that court are not like orations spoken by a Grecian orator in the circles of his people, heard by them that crowd nearest him, or that sound limited by the circles of air, or the enclosure of a wall; but everything is represented to every person;

## HAYWARD.

so open and plaine a viewe, that all the world shall poynt at me and say, *Fie! ah shame! behold what he hath done!*—when I shall bee charged with a strict reckoning how every moment of my life (even to the twinkling of an eye) hath beene employed, and be compelled to answer to many things whereof I would have scorned to have been either questioned or told during the time of my life; when not onely my actions, but my surcease from actions, not my words onely, but also my silence, and as well the vacancie of my minde as my very least and lightest thoughts shall be severely examined—the one for *committing* that which is evill, the other for *omitting* that which is good, it being sufficient to condemne mee even that I lived, (as the fig-tree was cursed which did beare leaves and no fruite), if my life were not employed in the service of God; when the heavens shall threaten me, the earth cast mee up, and all the creatures which I have abused cry vengeance against me; when the devils shall accuse me, my owne conscience give evidence against me, and the

TAYLOR.

and then, let it be considered, when thy shame and secret turpitude, thy midnight revels and secret hypocrisies, thy lustful thoughts and treacherous designs, thy falsehood to God and startings from thy holy promises, thy follies and impieties, shall be laid open before all the world, and that then shall be spoken by the trumpet of an archangel upon the housetop, the highest battlements of heaven, all those filthy words and lewd circumstances which thou didst act secretly;—thou wilt find that thou wilt have reason strangely to be ashamed. All the wise men in the world shall know how vile thou hast been. God, and all the angels of heaven and earth, all his holy myriads, all his redeemed saints, shall stare and wonder at thy impurities and follies.”<sup>1</sup>

HAYWARD.

whole jury of saints passe their verdict upon me?

“In what assembly shall this judgment be? Even before the whole court of heaven; in presence of all the angels; in presence of all the saints, whose bright beauty will make my deformity more ugly and monstrous, as contraries set together doe most evidently appeare. So many devils as there are, so many accusers shall be against mee; so many witnesses shall be against mee as ever I have committed sinnes. What trembling, what shame will then seaze upon me! What admiration will there be of heaven and of earth! What looking on of all creatures! When in the assembly of angels and saints, as so many starres, before the presence of Jesus Christ, the bright sunne of purity and glory, a loathsome sinner shall bee brought forth, poore, naked, and alone, accompanied only with his accusing conscience and arrayed with the ornaments of his iniquities. When the large history of his life shall bee openly read, and the clamor of his sins shall strike his conscience into a dumbe dumpe.”

<sup>1</sup> Advent Sunday, pt. i.

Numberless passages in the writings of Taylor await their elucidation or commentary, whenever a second Keble shall present us with an edition worthy of being placed by the side of Hooker. In the previous extract, the classic allusion to the "circles" of the people will not have been unmarked. The place of the Athenian assemblies, a short distance from the Areopagus hill, comprised an area of nearly twelve thousand square yards. Its form was a semicircle, of which the radius varied from sixty to eighty yards. There, upon a rectangular block of stone, Demosthenes harangued six thousand Athenians, seated in circles upon the ground, that sloped gently down into the hollow of the Agora. Taylor has, also, treated this appalling publication of sins and hypocrisies, by the angelic trumpet, in the presence of the universal resurrection, with thrilling reality, in the third part of his sermon on the Apples of Sodom.

## TAYLOR.

"The third sort of accusers are the devils, and they will do it with malicious and evil purposes; and cannot the accuser truly say to the judge concerning such persons (the wicked)—'They were thine by creation, but mine by their own choice; thou didst redeem them, indeed, but they sold themselves to me for a trifle, or for an unsatisfying interest; thou diedst for them, but they obeyed my

## HAYWARD.

"Then shall the divell also be ready in this manner to oppose against him. O just judge! I have neither done him pleasure nor endured for him any paine; and yet see what a nimble care he hath borne to all my directions; how duely hath he followed my counsailes, how dutifully obeyed my commandments; how perfectly hee is transformed into mine image. As for thee, who hast done so

TAYLOR.

commandments; I gave them nothing; I promised them nothing, but the filthy pleasures of a night, or the joys of madness, or the delights of a disease; I never hanged upon the cross three long hours for them, nor endured this poor life thirty-three years together for their interest.”

HAYWARD.

much good and suffered so much evil for him, he hath never remembered thee; or if he did, it was either with proud contempt or base mockery, or else with obstinate cruelty and despatch.”

In the next quotation, the similarity becomes almost verbal.

TAYLOR.

“And now, upon the supposition of these premises, we may imagine that it will be an infinite amazement to meet the Lord to be our judge, whose person we have murdered, whose honour we have disparaged, whose purposes we have destroyed, whose joys we have lessened, whose passion we have made ineffectual, and whose love we have trampled under our prophane and impious feet.”<sup>2</sup>

HAYWARD.

“Who, then, shall be my judge? Even he to whose contumely did tend whatsoever I have done amiss. He, I say, whose majesty I have dishonoured, whose mercy and might I have despised, whose glory I have abased, whose goodness I have abused, whose presence I have prophaned, and whose long patience I have interpreted either ignorance or allowance of all my evil.”

The imagery and expression of the following passages are also nearly identical; but here, as in almost every other instance, whatever capital he borrows, he puts out to interest, and whatever image he finds brick, he leaves marble:—

<sup>1</sup> Advent Sunday, pt. i.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pt. ii.

## TAYLOR.

"In the meantime, wonder not that God, who loves mankind so well, should punish him so severely; for therefore the evil fall into an accursed portion, because they despised that which God most loves, his Son and his mercies, his great and his holy Spirit; and they that do all this, have cause to complain of nothing but their own follies; and they shall feel the accursed consequents then, when they shall see the Judge sit above them angry and severe, inexorable and terrible; under them an intolerable hell; within them, their consciences clamorous and diseased; without them, all the world on fire; on the right hand, those men glorified whom they persecuted or despised; on the left hand, the devils accusing; for this is the day of the Lord's terror, and who is able to abide it?"<sup>1</sup>

## HAYWARD.

"Who, where, what thing shall then bee my comfort, when I shall bee included in these extreame straights? having *on one side* my sins accusing me: *on the other*, justice threatening me; *above*, an angry Judge condemning me; *beneath*, hell open and the boyling furnace ready to devour me; *before*, the devil with bitter scoffes and upbraidings haling me; *behind*, the saints and my nearest friends not only forsaking me, but rejoycing and praising God for his justice in my damnation; *within*, my conscience tearing mee; *without*, the powers of heaven shaken and dissolved, the elements shivered in peeces, the whole world flaming, and all damned soules crying and cursing round about me. O indignation of the Almighty, fall not upon me, for I have neither power to resist thee, nor patience to beare thee, nor place to avoyde thee."

Without lingering to subject these discourses to any further analysis, I may notice the sublime description of the world, suddenly transformed into a kingdom of fear, pervaded by a dreadful twilight,

<sup>1</sup> End of the third Sermon on the Second Advent.



and echoing with the simultaneous shriek from an infinity of graves, bursting open at the summons of the trumpet, which is heard rolling over the dissolution and crash of all this wonderful fabric of external nature. Everywhere we see a tremendous power of aggravation, and a breadth and vehemence of execution, that belong to the noblest scenes of tragedy. One image has always struck me by its immeasurable capacity of terror; it is the comparison of the sufferings of the doomed sinner, converging into a dark and indivisible unity of torment—not broken or weakened by the participation of millions of lost souls—to the whole body of the sun, which is seen by every one in the same horizon. The Contemplations of the State of Man contain a simile of equal power, where the Divine justice is likened to a river of fire, obstructed and dammed up during thirty or forty years, but rushing upon the sinner at the last day, with an irresistible inundation, and flooding him, at the same moment, with flame and vengeance.

Other sermons display the abundance or the brightness, the wisdom or the tenderness, of his learning and intellect, his experience and sympathy: that on the Marriage Ring is more beautiful; that on the House of Feasting more varied; that on the Good and Evil Tongue more ingenious; that on the Faith and Patience of the Saints more pathetic; but the discourses on the Second Advent of Christ unfold the action of his mind in its grandest opera-

tions of creative energy.<sup>1</sup> They are the best examples of the sublimity which formed a chief element of his genius; that mysterious faculty of representation and impression, which makes dead thoughts to live and move; peoples the Purgatory of Dante, and animates the portraitures of Tacitus; too subtle to be enclosed in a definition, and evaporating from the crucible of the critic; a flame often invisible, but never extinguished; sinking in one age, to ascend in another; here, flashing upon the chisel of Phidias; there, driving on the pen of Sallust; now making the sails of the Argonautic ship to quiver beneath the wings of the eagle, in the verse of Apollonius;<sup>2</sup> and now darkening the creation with the solitary hand of God, in the epic of Milton.<sup>3</sup> Descriptions such as these resemble certain pictures, and are not to be looked close into, like the Candle-light of Shelken, or the interiors of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Alexander Knox (*Remains*, i. 271) mentions the third volume of Taylor's Sermons, as equal to any composition in the English language.

<sup>2</sup> B. ii. v. 1251.

<sup>3</sup> The archangel reproaches Satan for presuming to war with God, who,

“ Out of smallest things could without end  
Have raised incessant armies to defeat  
Thy folly, or *with solitary hand*  
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,  
Unaided could have finished thee, and whelm'd  
Thy legions under darkness.”

Of these lines, Mr. Haydon truly observes, that they embody one of the most awful conceptions upon earth.

Mieris. You must stand back to contemplate the figures and scenery of Shakspeare or Taylor, and supply the atmospheric calculation of the painter by the softening distance, which a cultivated taste interposes as the medium of vision.

In some of his speculations upon the invisible world, and its retributive sufferings, he indulged in a daring extravagance, that combines the monstrous associations of Bosch with the hideous realities of Morales; but in the discourses on the Advent, his juster parallel is supplied by the most famous work of M. Angelo. Perhaps the sermons and the picture fail in sufficiently awakening our sympathy. We wonder and tremble; but the heart is not proportionably affected. The vigour of conception, the austerity, the confusion, the turbulence of thought, and, what Foster well called, the assailable impetuosity of the argument, unite in bending the proudest spirit. But the exhortation is sometimes too learned to be natural; and the preacher is lost in the scholar, as the painter was in the anatomist.

## CHAPTER XVI.

- I. Holy Living and Dying characterised.—II. Ductor Dubitantium; the author vindicated; Stillingfleet.—III. Taylor's habits of composition.—IV. His style; its beauties and defects.—V. Compared with some of his contemporaries — Barrow, South, Hammond, and Hall.—VI. Parallel between Taylor and Milton.

WHAT Milton accomplished for religion in poetry, Taylor achieved in prose. The Holy Living and Dying are the Paradise Lost and Regained of devotional literature—with their sublime strain mingling the more engaging beauty of the Christian “Allegro” and “Penseroso.” All images of rural delight; the rose and the lily; the lark at heaven's gate; the various accidents of sun and shade; the shadows of trees, the gilding of clouds, the murmuring of waters:—whatever charms the eye, or comforts the heart, or enchants the ear, is collected in these pictures of the religious character. In this work our love and memory of Taylor are bound up.<sup>1</sup> It was designed to minister to practice, to preach to the weary, to cheer the sick, to assist the penitent, to bind up the broken spirit, to strengthen the weak

<sup>1</sup> Audiamus jam illum bene beateque vivendi ac moriendi Antistitem.—*Keble; Prælect.* ii.

hands and the feeble knees. It has fulfilled its task. What eyes have been dried by its consolations! What hopes lighted by its promises! It is known that the mind of John Wesley received its first impulse to fervid piety from that chapter which treats of purity of intention. "Instantly," are his words, "I resolved to dedicate *all* my life to God—all my thoughts and words and actions, being thoroughly convinced there was no medium, but that every part of life must either be a sacrifice to God or myself." The same fire of consecrated genius still burns within it; a lamp to the feet in the darkest night.<sup>1</sup>

Coleridge, who considered the chief strength of Taylor to lie in the magnificence of his conceptions—in which he found Shakspeare to be his only rival—would, probably, have supported his praise from the Holy Living and Dying; but the Ductor Dubitantium would, doubtless, have been chosen by the author as the representative of his genius. He intended it to supply an acknowledged deficiency in English theology. The casuistical contributions of some Lutheran writers, and the Essay of Bishop Hall, were not overlooked; while that portion of the subject which embraced the power and offices of ecclesiastical superiors, had

<sup>1</sup> It required all the presumption of the late Dr. Arnold to write,—“I wish I could sympathise with you in what you say of the old divines. I quite agree as to their language; it is delightful to my taste; but I cannot find in any of them a really great man. I admire Taylor's genius, but yet how little was he capable of handling worthily any great question.” —*To a Friend, November 1836.*

been already completed, as he told Charles II., in the lost books of "the incomparable Mr. Hooker."

It is not difficult to recognise in the *Ductor Dubitantium*, or Rule of Conscience, the majestic influence of the Polity; the style is unusually close and unadorned, and speaks to the understanding more than to the affections. The writer desired to afford to all honest and patient inquirers, such rules of duty and tests of conduct as might guide them in the "proportions of conscience." An "explication" of all the precepts of Christianity was reserved for a future season. For the loss of such a work we might well mourn. But he has shown in a few admirable sentences, that in whatever degree the simplicity and love of the Gospel are received into the heart, the perplexities of conscience will diminish; and that, as the light of the Cross falls broad and full over the mind, the bewildering shadows of moral philosophy are sure to disappear. The *Ductor Dubitantium* presents the mind of Taylor under an aspect altogether new. Mr. Hallam would hesitate to have promised him the success at the bar, which the compact and logical precision of Stillingfleet might have obtained; but Coleridge was convinced that an advocate might make the writings of Taylor more profitable to his vocation, than all the remains of Demosthenes, Æschines, and Cicero. The opinion of the poet seems to be juster than the historian's. Whenever, as in the present instance, the subject was thought by himself to require a severer treatment, we find the luxuriancy of his imagination and the excursiveness of his



learning repressed and circumscribed. In the face of an adversary, or up the difficult ascent of an argument, he knew how to marshal his broad front of magnificence, and disperse the encumbering crowd of followers. None of his contemporaries understood better the military discipline of the thoughts. The entire section of the fourth chapter—in which he proves the truth of Christianity from a cumulation of probabilities—may be specified as one of the most splendid summaries in historical literature. Thought succeeds thought in natural and immediate evolution. To the picturesque grouping of Gibbon, it adds the stately march of Hooker, and the fiery succession of South;—more flexible than the first; more impetuous than the second; more majestic than the third. In his finely conceived portraiture of the triumphs of Christianity,—when the “holy Jesus made invisible powers to do him visible honours”—when “his apostles haunted demons from their tripods, their navels, their dens, their hollow pipes, their temples, their altars,”—when, “he made their oracles silent”—I do not remember to have seen the resemblance noticed to Milton’s Ode on the Morning of our Lord’s Nativity.<sup>1</sup> That noble poem,

<sup>1</sup> Compare, particularly, the following stanza:—

“The oracles are dumb,  
No voice or hideous hum  
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving;  
Apollo from his shrine  
Can no more divine,  
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.  
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,  
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.”

written in the youth of his intellect, could scarcely have been unknown to Taylor. From this chapter, Paley borrowed some portions of his argument respecting the cumulative evidences of Christianity.

The *Ductor Dubitantium* has been copiously analysed by Heber, and more comprehensively reviewed by Mr. Hallam. I am unable to explain the silence of Mackintosh in his sketch of Ethical Philosophy. From a parallel with the Ecclesiastical Polity, the casuistry of Taylor does not come forth entirely triumphant. The redundancy of his language has, however, been overstated. Copious he could not fail to be, and in metaphysics, as in devotion, he might have complained, with a truth to which Waller never could pretend, that a tide of words rushed in upon him, overflowing whatever he built. But he is often simple and exact; and many of his illustrations are as clearly developed as they were ingeniously conceived. Také the following comparison:—"For in those sins where the conscience affrights, and in those in which she affrights not, (supposing the sins equal, but of different natures,) there is no other difference, but that conscience is a clock, which in one man strikes aloud and gives warning; and in another, the hand points silently to the figures, but strikes not; but by this we may as surely see what the other hears, that his hours pass away, and death hastens, and after death comes judgment."<sup>1</sup>

Twelve years after the publication of Taylor's

<sup>1</sup> Works, ed. Heber, xi. 403.

book, the treatise of Cumberland appeared; the herald of a school which was to receive into its porch, students so dissimilar in their intellectual qualities as Hutcheson, Law, Paley, Priestley, and Bentham. The old system vanishes before the new.<sup>1</sup> The schoolmen, the fathers, the canonists, and the casuists, retire; and Experience assumes the judicial functions of Authority. The author did not live long enough to behold his great work receding into that twilight, which has long hidden it from the common eye. Through all the trials of his various life it had risen before him, the guiding star of his thoughts, and the continual theme of his prayers. In the solitude of a Welsh valley, in the tumult of civil warfare, among the endearments of friends,—its growing outline was always present. Poor, persecuted, and sick—we see him stooping over the page. In the painfulest path of his journey, that high argument, in all its beauty of completion, drew on his footsteps. So transparent and bewildering is the atmosphere of hope, in which genius contemplates the objects of its creation or discovery.

With the exception of his Rule of Conscience, Taylor probably gave no revision to what he wrote; committing his glowing descriptions or learned polemics to the press, in all the heat of their creation, having the dust of the anvil still upon them,

<sup>1</sup> See Hallam, *Introduction to Literature of Europe*, iv. 311.

and ‘finished more through happiness than pains.’ But in books, as in pictures, we ought to distinguish between execution and high finish; between Addison and Massillon, Rubens or Breugel. Hammond exhausted the profits of his writings in their preliminary circulation among his friends; even the proofs were subjected in separate sheets to a succession of criticisms. He has given us finish, not execution. In like manner, the hesitation of Sanderson cramped his hand; and the eye of genius lost much of its brightness in its watches. Taylor’s facility of performance emboldened him; yet, as Ben Jonson said of Shakspeare, we wish he had blotted. The fire of invention might have been damped, in the confident hope that it would spring up again with a stronger flame. Four years did not exhaust it in the Donna Lisa of Leonardo da Vinci, nor twice that number in the Pietro Martire of Titian. Of his controversial writings, those upon popery have been esteemed the most powerful, as those on original sin are assuredly the most eloquent. He never fails altogether, except in his attempts at humour, in which Milton himself is not more grotesquely melancholy. Sometimes a trivial allusion intrudes to degrade the dignity of the argument;<sup>1</sup> but every-

<sup>1</sup> Coleridge has a happy remark:—“His arguments are a procession of all the magnates of the land, in their grandest, richest, and most splendid paraphernalia; but the total impression is weakened by the multitudes of lacqueys and ragged intruders running in and out between the ranks.”—*Remains*, iii. 232.

where we are amazed at the affluence of his erudition, and the vivacity of its application. There is, to adopt one of his own expressive words, a perpetual prosperity in his writings; bloom and fertility rise spontaneously from every furrow turned up by his plough.

Mr. Hallam finds a source of weakness in the circuitry of his pleonastic style, and the endless length of his sentences, "not only altogether unmusical, but not always reducible to grammar." This censure is scarcely deserved. Taylor is free from what Warburton called the stupendous incorrectness of Clarendon; and his periods, without being correct, are generally harmonious. They have a symmetry of their own—the swelling note and dying pause of an organ. Nor is the diffusiveness of his style less original. So strong and binding a connexion of ideas runs through the page, that it has been ingeniously compared to a long rope, which every thought, however distant or rich in apparel, supports and pulls. Taylor had none of the polish which Lord Mansfield discovered in the gentility of Temple. He is not a master of style in the sense of Massillon trembling over the choice of an epithet. But he who shared in Spenser's fancy, had some of the delicacy of Spenser's ear. Every noble image is born in music. Numberless passages move along with exquisite rhythm; nor could a single page be easily found without examples of expression, terse and forcible, and having an edge keen and tempered, as Johnson or South imparted to a paragraph.

Can a word of the following quotation be altered ? “ God hath given every man work enough to do, that there should be no room for idleness, and yet hath so ordered the world that there shall be space for devotion. He that hath the fewest businesses in the world, is called upon to spend more time in the dressing of his soul; and he that has the most affairs, may so order them that they shall be a service of God.”<sup>1</sup> If the point and sparkle of antithesis be sought, it meets the eye continually. “ No man will hire a general to cut wood, or shake hay with a sceptre.”<sup>2</sup>

Nor ought the circuitry of his style to be a topic of complaint. It is the discursiveness of a guide, who, having a beautiful landscape to exhibit, conducts the spectator to different points of view, according as the scenery, in sun or shadow, comes out with a more gay and diversified lustre. Johnson observed of Warburton, in the *Divine Legation*, that he carries you round and round without taking you forward, but that the reader willingly submits to the delay, since he has no wish to be hurried from contemplations so charming. When we examine the intellect of Taylor, in all the shapes of its manifestation, his own eulogy of Bramhall seems to be due to himself; for in whom, if not in him, shall we find the great lines of Hooker’s judiciousness, of Jewell’s learning, and Andrewes’ acuteness? On the side of caution, indeed, he is sometimes weak, and

<sup>1</sup> Holy Living and Dying, sect. i.

<sup>2</sup> Holy Dying, chap. ii. sect. 4.



a certain rashness of admission and fiery impatience of assault are noticed in his controversies. But from all defects and incompleteness what human production is free? Some of the scaffolding erected by M. Angelo is said to be yet remaining in a room of the Laurentian Library. So it must ever be with the architecture of genius. The calm eye of the critic discovers what the creative ardour of the builder passed by unobserved; and through succeeding ages, the board, the ladder, and the rope, deform the stateliest palaces of thought.

Johnson, according to Hawkins, admired Hooker for logical precision, Sanderson for acuteness, Taylor for erudition, Brown for penetration, and Cowley for grace. There is reason to believe that Johnson had read Taylor to greater profit than to think learning the dominant characteristic of his mind. Such, however, was the vulgar error of the age; and Mason, in illustrating a letter of Gray, by one of the loveliest pictures in the Holy Dying, was not ashamed to observe, that the old divine had occasionally as much power of description "as even the modern poet."

If we compare him with Barrow, the admirable remark of Warburton rises to the lip:—and we acknowledge, that into all the strength and abundance of his contemporary he darted a ray of lightning, which, if not derived from Demosthenes or Cicero, had as noble an original.<sup>1</sup> The distinction

<sup>1</sup> Letters from a late eminent Prelate, 128.

is drawn, with equal accuracy, between Taylor, viewed, in the classical sense of the word, as an *orator*, and Barrow, as a *discourser*; the only particular of inferiority being in the reach and vigour of mathematical invention, that might have given to the world, in Barrow, an earlier Newton; if studies still holier had not diverted his attention, until death called him to his reward. Like Taylor, he searched Chrysostom, but reproduced him in a different manner; and we find as few traces of the golden mouth in the ample page of Barrow, as of the gnomic morality of Euripides in the declamation of Burke, or the sparkle of Ovid in the solemnity of Milton. After Taylor, I love Barrow. His argument—living in every fold—crushes and absorbs whatever it encircles. His fancy is kept in check by his reason; and the magnificent amplifications of Plato are compressed by the chain of Aristotle. The model of senatorial eloquence on the lips of Chatham, he has continued to be the fountain from which the costliest urns are filled. Reflecting the church and her doctrines, without latitudinarianism or superstition; faithful, yet not puritanic; zealous, yet not visionary; imaginative, yet practical. To such a store-house of spiritual honey, who would not hasten?

“ Omnia nos itidem depascimur aurea dicta;  
Aurea ! perpetuâ semper dignissima vitâ.”

In South, the lines of resemblance to Taylor are fainter. In dignity of character, not less than beauty

of intellect, the parallel fails. His sermons are charged with the matter of passion, and emit the stormy light of a theological Junius. The combination of sacred and secular things is extremely painful. Taylor intermingles classic and scripture history, and gathers flowers for English churches from the tomb of Virgil, or the farm of Horace; but South degrades the altar with the cabal, and binds up the prayer with the pamphlet. Some of his sermons resemble the old chapel in Haddon Hall, where, by an ingenious communication with the kitchen, the matronly eye was enabled to divide its oversight between the psalms and the domestics, and turn from the lesson to the larder by a natural transition. This immediate contact with the world, even in the most impressive discourses of South, detracts largely from the delight of the reader. The Tatler<sup>1</sup> commended him for making all his faculties "bear to the great end of his hallowed profession," and pronounced him the better man for being a wit. Whatever his own advantage may have been, his hearers suffered. How strange, for example, how jarring to all calm and devotional feelings, the sudden intrusion of a political caricature, sketched, like the following, with such rare skill of exaggeration:—

"Who that had looked upon Agathocles first handling the clay, and making pots under his father, and afterwards turning robber, would have thought that from such a condition he should come to be king of Sicily? Who that had seen Masaniello, a

<sup>1</sup> No. 205.

poor fisherman, with his red cap and his angle, could have reckoned it possible to see such a pitiful thing, within a week after, shining in his cloth of gold, and with a word or a nod absolutely commanding the whole city of Naples? And who, that had beheld such a bankrupt, beggarly fellow as Cromwell first entering the Parliament-house with a thread-bare, torn cloak, and a greasy hat, (and perhaps neither of them paid for,) could have suspected, that in the space of so few years, he should, by the murder of one king, and the banishment of another, ascend the throne, be invested in the royal robes, and want nothing of the state of a king but the changing of his hat into a crown?"<sup>1</sup>

From his brightness of intellect and intuitive good sense, if much has been given, more might have been required. One magnificent utterance we possess in his discourse upon the creation of man after the image of God, which is not only undefiled by temporary associations, but instinct with the divinest life of eloquence. His style is never obnoxious to his own censure<sup>2</sup> of those authors, whose words are forced to hang loose and light, because they have no substance underneath to support them; but in this sermon he excelled himself; and into Barrow's energy poured Taylor's imagination. Hear his description of the intellect in its morning:—"I confess it is difficult for us,

<sup>1</sup> Sermons, t. i. 185; on Prov. xvi. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Sermon, Eccles. v. 2.

who date our ignorance from our first being, and were still bred up with the same infirmities about us with which we were born, to raise our thoughts and imagination to those intellectual perfections that attended our nature in the time of innocence; as it is for a peasant bred up in the obscurities of a cottage, to fancy in his mind the unseen splendours of a court. But by rating positives by their privatives, and other arts of reason, by which discourse supplies the want of the reports of sense, we may collect the excellency of the understanding then, by the glorious remainders of it now, and guess at the stateliness of the building by the magnificence of its ruins. All those arts, rarities, and inventions, which vulgar minds gaze at, the ingenious pursue, and all admire, are but the relics of an intellect defaced by sin and time. We admire it now, only as antiquaries do a piece of old coin, for the stamp it once bore, and not for those vanishing lineaments and disappearing draughts that remain upon it at present. And certainly that must needs have been very glorious, the decays of which are so admirable. He that is comely, when old and decrepit, surely was very beautiful when he was young. An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise."<sup>1</sup> This sermon was preached in the cathedral of St. Paul, in 1662, and never had those walls resounded with so unbroken a strain of eloquent music. It might be addressed,

<sup>1</sup> Works, t. i. 32, (Ed. 1842.)

without revision, to a modern congregation, but for the peril of the contrast. Foster's remark<sup>1</sup> upon the impossibility of altering the diction of our old authors, bears strongly upon South. Not a word could be transposed or replaced. The language is identical with the thought, which lives and moves throughout it; not the clothing, but the skin; and not to be changed, without flaying the sentiment alive.

In Hammond, the admirer of Taylor finds gentler features, and a more winning look of kindred. His piety has embellished his memory. In him, the faculty of acquisition repressed the spirit of discovery. His piles of learning wanted the descending flame. He should have read less, and reflected more. Abroad and at home, in the fields and the bed-chamber, a book was his constant companion; even the necessary interruptions of the toilet were turned to account; and a change of dress involved the digestion of a page of Basil. He used to say that he "could not abide to talk with himself." The confession is the key to his intellectual character. Learned and devout, his writings, without being destitute of animation and light, are not marked by any decisive lineaments of genius; and in this sense are inferior to the compositions of Hall, whose lips, in the words of an attached friend, dropped myrrh that filled the house of God with perfume. It still breathes in the sanctuary.

Full of zeal and knowledge, with a rich vein

<sup>1</sup> See *Miscellaneous Thoughts*, in *Foster's Life and Correspondence*, by Ryland.



of fancy and a quick eye for character, Hall seems, nevertheless, to have been unequal to design or fill up a work of grandeur. He abounds in conceits; the lustre of a thought is rarely preserved entire; and while the sun of fancy continually flashes out, the gleam is broken by the motes that play in it.

The history of the 17th century brings Taylor and Pearson together. Fighting almost side by side in the front ranks of the catholic army, they differed not more in weapons than in manner of combat. Taylor, always splendid, merited the epithet of Homer's chieftain—*παμφαινων*. His shield and sword cast a light on the ground he occupied. Pearson, more homely and practical, very seldom employs a classical or poetical illustration. He had little fancy; no streams of delicious imagery gush from the recesses of his argument, "with a sweet inland murmur." His temper was scholastical, as Taylor's was imaginative. In style, he resembled South, and displayed occasionally the venom, as well as the spots of the viper. His sermon on the Excellency of Forms of Prayer supplies a specimen both of the sting and the colour.

Other names there are of contemporaries, or friends, with whom it might not be displeasing or uninteresting for Taylor to be compared. The thronging faces in the background would only throw out more vividly the portrait of the principal figure. The pencil might try its skill on the features of Fuller, whose serious wisdom and suggestive eloquence are

too frequently forgotten in his mirth and quaintness; or of Browne, whose affected obscurity cannot conceal the sublimity of his thoughts, which, perhaps, affect the eye with a more mysterious awe, from the glimmering haze that envelopes them; or of Cowley, in whose prose might be found the rudiments of all that is musical, attractive, or refined in the structure of our language. To what picture would not such faces lend a charm! But there is one contemporary of Taylor, who ought not to be painted behind, but beside him,—the Bishop and the Poet; divided in their lives, but by fame united in their deaths,—and as much above their successors, as they were equal to each other. This parallel is furnished by a writer who has since obtained some of the honours he bestowed.

“If ever two great men might seem, during their whole lives, to have moved in direct opposition, though neither of them has at any time introduced the name of the other, Milton and Jeremy Taylor were they. The former commenced his career by attacking the Church-Liturgy, and all set forms of prayer. The latter, but far more successfully, by defending both. Milton’s next work was against the prelacy and the then existing Church-government,—Taylor’s, in vindication and support of them. Milton became more and more a stern republican, or rather an advocate for that religious and moral aristocracy, which, in his day, was called republicanism, and which, even more than royalism itself, is the direct antipode of modern Jacobinism. Taylor,

as more and more sceptical concerning the fitness of men in general for power, became more and more attached to the prerogatives of monarchy. From Calvinism, with a still decreasing respect for Fathers, Councils, and Church antiquity in general, Milton seems to have ended in an indifference, if not a dislike to all forms of ecclesiastical government, and to have retreated wholly into the inward and spiritual church-communion of his own spirit with the Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Taylor, with a growing reverence for authority, an increasing sense of the insufficiency of the Scriptures without the aids of tradition, and the consent of authorized interpreters, advanced as far in his approaches, (not, indeed, to Popery, but) to Roman-catholicism, as a conscientious minister of the English Church could well venture. Milton would be, and would utter the same to all, on all occasions: he would tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Taylor would become all things to all men, if by any means he might benefit any. Hence he availed himself, in his popular writings, of opinions and representations which stand often in striking contrast, with the doubts and convictions expressed in his more philosophical works. He appears, indeed, not too severely to have blamed that management of truth, authorized and exemplified by almost all the Fathers."

"The same antithesis might be carried on with the elements of their several intellectual powers. Milton, austere, condensed, imaginative, supporting his

truth by direct enunciation of lofty moral sentiment, and by distinct visual representations, and in the same spirit, overwhelming what he deemed falsehood, by moral denunciation and a succession of pictures appalling or repulsive. In his prose, so many metaphors, so many allegorical miniatures. Taylor, eminently discursive, accumulative, and (to use one of his own words) agglomerative; still more rich in images than Milton himself, but images of fancy, and presented to the common and passive eye, rather than to the eye of the imagination. Whether supporting or assailing, he makes his way either by argument or by appeals to the affections, unsurpassed even by the schoolmen in subtlety, agility, and logic wit, and unrivalled by the most rhetorical of the Fathers in the copiousness and vividness of his expressions and illustrations. Here words that convey feelings, and words that flash images, and words of abstract notion, flow together, and whirl and rush onward like a stream, at once rapid and full of eddies; and yet still interfused here and there, we see a tongue or islet of smooth water, with some picture in it of earth or sky, landscape or living group of quiet beauty.

“Differing, then, so widely, and almost contrarily, wherein did these great men agree?—wherein did they resemble each other? In genius, in learning, in unfeigned piety, in blameless purity of life, and in benevolent aspirations and purposes for the moral and temporal improvement of their fellow-creatures! Both of them wrote a Latin *Accidence*,

to render education less painful to children; both of them composed hymns and psalms proportioned to the capacity of common congregations; both, nearly at the same time, set the glorious example of publicly recommending and supporting general toleration, and the liberty both of the pulpit and the press."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Apologetic Preface, appended to the first volume of Coleridge's Poems. 1836.

## CHAPTER XVII.

- I. The religious opinions of Taylor; their practical tendency.—II. His doctrines; Baptism and the Holy Communion; Sanctification; reverential views of the Cross.—III. Occasional variations of sentiment explained.—IV. His manner of argument defended.—V. His forbearance and gentleness.—VI. The pervading sanctity of his life and conversation.

THE broad outline of Taylor's religious character is sufficiently defined by the remark of the late Mr. Davison,<sup>1</sup> that he is the author who, above every other, has made theology practical; converting doctrines into homilies; speculations into prayers and the personal interests of a holy life; who, in every action is intent upon piety, and the energy of a right faith; and constantly lays his hand, with an absolute and independent grasp, upon all protestant principles. He despised the most learned inquiries,<sup>2</sup> if they exercised no direct and transforming

<sup>1</sup> Remains, 308.

<sup>2</sup> "How many volumes have been written about angels, about immaculate conception, about original sin, when all that is solid reason or clear revelation, in all these three articles, may be reasonably enough comprised in forty lines! And in these trifles and impertinences men are curiously busy, while they neglect those glorious precepts of Chris-



influence upon the temper. He exhorted his own clergy to speak very little of the secret and high things of God, but as much as they could of the tenderness and humility of the Redeemer; not to compare one ordinance with another—as prayer with preaching—but to use both in their appointed seasons.<sup>1</sup> Human life, as a school for heaven, is the constant topic of his illustrations and admonitions. “Suppose every day to be a day of business; for your whole life is a race and a battle, a merchandize and a journey. Every day propose to yourself a rosary or a chaplet of good works, to present to God at night.”<sup>2</sup> And this task-work of probation he requires to be done under the light of the Cross, and builds nothing beyond the boundary of its shadow. There is an inexpressible sweetness in the adoring affection with which he teaches the disciple to gaze into the Master’s face, that some beauty of holiness may be reflected upon his own. “Blessed is he that understands what it is to love Jesus, and contends earnestly to be like him. Nothing else can satisfy or make us perfect. But be thou a bearer of his cross as well as a lover of his kingdom.

tianity and holy life, which are the glories of our religion, and would enable us to a happy eternity.”—*Epistle Dedicatory to Liberty of Prophecy*.

And again, at the beginning of the *Liberty of Prophecy*—“It is of greater consequence to believe right in the validity or invalidity of a death-bed repentance, than to believe aright in the question of purgatory.”

<sup>1</sup> Rules and Advice to the Clergy.

<sup>2</sup> Agenda; or, Things to be Done.

Suffer tribulation for him, or from him, with the same spirit that thou receivest consolation." Like one of the solemn limners of ancient times, he never becomes weary of illuminating this Divine Head; his arguments and exhortations are only the frames of the portrait; and certainly the poet's feeling was his, that

" Love on the Saviour's dying head  
 Her spikenard drops unblamed may pour,  
 May mount his Cross, and wrap him dead  
 In spices from the golden shore;  
 Risen, may embalm his sacred name,  
 With all a painter's art, and all a minstrel's flame."

Thus we find his most glowing appeals in behalf of a holy life, always combined with a reverential reference to Him from whom its strength is derived. He never sits under the green branch, without pointing to the Vine into which it was engrafted; nor is St. James disunited from St. Paul. "Faith is a sacrifice of the understanding to God; repentance sacrifices the whole will; that gives the knowing, this gives up all the desiring faculties; that makes us disciples, this makes us servants of the Holy Jesus. Nothing else was preached by the Apostles, nothing else was enjoined as the duty of men, nothing else did build up the body of the Christian religion. So that as faith contains all that knowledge which is necessary to salvation, so repentance comprehends in it all the whole practice and working duty of a returning Christian. And this was the sum total of all that St. Paul preached

to the Gentiles, when in his farewell sermon to the bishops and priests of Ephesus he professed that he kept back nothing that was profitable to them; and yet it was all nothing but this—repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup> His severe views of penitence at the close of life, and his interpretation of the form of absolution, may be explained by his oppressive sense of man’s call to *work out his salvation*.

He teaches over the Prayer-Book, and draws loving eyes to the rich decorations of the church, her festivals, fastings, and solemnities. He shows the King’s daughter in her raiment of wrought gold, and all glorious within. In baptism, he acknowledged the communication of a new spiritual principle, putting us into a state of pardon and acceptance for the time to come, uniting the links of that chain of sanctification which was broken in Adam’s transgression, and brightening the understanding with hallowed thoughts and feelings. Like Hammond, he extended the operative virtue of this sacrament over the entire life of the baptized; the seed of God is sown in the ground of the heart, repentance waters it, and “faith makes it *subactum solum*, the ground and furrows apt to produce fruit in its due season, if it be refreshed with the former and the latter rain.”<sup>2</sup> We must not say that there is no

<sup>1</sup> The Invalidity of a Late, or Death-bed Repentance.

<sup>2</sup> See Works, ii. 265, &c.; and particularly the refutation of the Anabaptist’s objection in Liberty of Prophesying, sect. xviii. t. viii.

seed in the earth, because there is nothing green upon the face of it.

His views of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are those of his greatest contemporaries. Christ, he affirms, "does as really nourish and sanctify the soul, as the elements do the body. It is here, as in the other sacrament; for as there, natural water becomes the laver of regeneration, so here, bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ; but, there and here too, the first substance is changed by grace, but remains the same in nature."<sup>1</sup> The universality and omnipresence of the Atonement, the sanctification by the Holy Ghost, and the co-eternity and co-equality of the blessed Trinity,—these sacred articles of faith be held and taught with a fulness of belief, and a fervour of eloquence, that an unction from above could alone have inspired. He makes doctrines into pictures; and more than any writer who preceded, or is likely to follow him, charms the mind with the various and beautiful lights he represents them in. His illustration of spiritual influence is a vivid example. "Mark the rain that falls from above, and the same shower that dropped out of one cloud increaseth sundry plants in a garden, and severally according to the condition of every plant. In one stalk it renders a rose, in another a violet, divers in a third, and sweet in all. So the Spirit works its multiformous effects in several complexions, and all according to the increase of God."

<sup>1</sup> Works, ix. 424.

A diligent reader of the Fathers, he was not disposed to submit to their empire; denying to their decisions the weight of demonstrations, he consented to receive them as witnesses in matters of fact, and well-instructed scribes in difficulties of interpretation. Everywhere, with a dignified deference to authority and tradition, he asserts the right of private judgment. "Though the Church of England is my mother, and I hope I shall ever live and at last die in her communion, and if God shall call me to it, and enable me, I will not refuse to die for her, yet I conceive there is something most highly considerable in that saying—'Call no man master upon earth;' that is, no man's explication of her articles shall prejudice my affirmative, if it agrees with Scripture, and right reason, and the doctrine of the primitive church for the first three hundred years."<sup>1</sup> He had a lively insight into the true spirit of theological partizanship, and anxiously warned men against estimating their piety by remoteness from, or nearness to, any opinion; and from being so much in love with their own conclusions, as to call them by the name of faith and religion.<sup>2</sup> You can tell, he said, whether you or your neighbours live well; but not

<sup>1</sup> Preface to Clergy of England, prefixed to *Unum Necessarium*.

<sup>2</sup> "But men are, now-a-days, and indeed always have been, since the expiration of the first blessed ages of Christianity, so in love with their own fancies and opinions, as to think faith and all Christendom is concerned in their support and maintenance; and whoever is not so fond, and does not dandle them like themselves, it grows up into a quarrel."—*Liberty of Prophecy* (at the beginning).

whether every speculative view of doctrine be justly founded. You are certain that such an action is vice; but cannot guarantee such an opinion to be heresy. In him, independence did not deviate into singularity. When he seemed to differ from the teaching of our Church in his interpretation of original sin, he laboured earnestly, and, as he thought successfully, to reconcile it with the Article it was considered to oppose. Heber attributes his error to an abhorrence of that dark theory of human punishment, which circulates under the image and superscription of Calvin.

It must be confessed that he is not always in concord with himself. One treatise, perhaps, declines or undervalues the testimony which its predecessor had elevated and praised. In the Defence of Episcopacy, he maintained the authenticity of some of the Apostolical canons, and in the Liberty of Prophecy, rejected them altogether. This joint of his armour tempted more than one spear, even in his own age. His opponents accused him of overthrowing with one hand what he built up with the other. He acknowledged the discrepancy; declaring that he broke down the outhouses to rescue a father and his children from the flames; destroyed an unimportant breastwork, to preserve the citadel with the treasure. This practice of Taylor ought to caution us against receiving short or insulated passages as declarations of his faith or opinions. In the hands of an ingenious artificer, systems of interpretation or doctrine, the most contrary to his general habits of



mind, might easily be constructed; each link, perhaps, collected from different portions of his works, and only dangerous when woven into a chain.

He has been accused<sup>1</sup> of avowing and defending the employment of weak arguments for laudable purposes; the charge being founded on certain passages in the *Liberty of Prophesying*. It seems to me that his observations have been misunderstood. In stating the case of his adversaries, he put "wooden daggers" into their hands, and then attacked them with his own deadlier weapons. But he never said that the daggers were not of wood. Mr. Hallam must have calculated largely on scholarly ignorance of Taylor's Rule of Conscience, when he referred to it for evidence that its author maintained the right of using arguments and authorities in controversy, which he did not believe to be valid: the writer affirming the contrary proposition.<sup>2</sup> He lays down with solemn emphasis the unlawfulness of telling a lie for God and truth, and thereby disordering the glorious economy of faith. The critic did not notice Taylor's distinction between ascertained fact and personal conviction. He suffers us to introduce an argument which we do not know, if we conscientiously believe it to be true: the measure of an argument not being its demonstration, but its probability; and a real and a supposed truth bearing the same relation to our moral innocency of purpose. And the interpretation, as

<sup>1</sup> By Mr. Hallam, *Introduction to Literature of Europe*, iv. 137.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter ii., rule 6, of the *Ductor Dubitantium*.

well as the reason of the rule, are to be found in the character of the human mind; variable in each individual, as the features to which it gives expression. In this and many other instances, his vindication is easy; but his most zealous admirers are willing to admit, with Heber, that his reasoning is sometimes inconclusive, and that his positions are neither impregnable, nor always defended. The effect of his occasional variations of sentiment and argument has been very happily compared<sup>1</sup> to the sensation of a person who comes on deck at sea, and finds the ship put about, and the whole line of coast reversed to the eye. But he soon recovers the lost way; and the voyage is continually cheered by the fragrance wafted out from those fertile and spicy shores, in which he always found a tranquil haven.

One feature of his character—conspicuous by its clear reflection in his works—is the stately freedom of his own mind, and the toleration he was willing to concede to others. If religion, in a great measure, stand or fall according to the abilities of those who proclaim the truth, it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of his services in the cause. He taught men that the Gospel has no alliance with tyranny; that it searches consciences, without an inquisition, and supplies martyrs, without a wheel; that bigotry is not essential to faith; nor the perdition of our neighbour to the salvation of ourselves. Convinced that no party possessed a mo-

<sup>1</sup> By Mr. Hallam, *Literature of Europe*, iii. 114.

nopoly of truth, he weighed the reasons of men rather than their names, and concluded his noble Apology for Christian Toleration with an oriental Apologue, of which the aptness is at least equal to the beauty. He tells us, that when Abraham sat at his tent door, according to his custom, waiting to entertain strangers, "he espied an old man stooping and leaning on his staff, weary with age and travail, coming towards him, who was a hundred years of age; he received him kindly, washed his feet, provided supper, caused him to sit down, but observing that the old man eat and prayed not, nor begged for a blessing on his meat, he asked him why he did not worship the God of heaven. The old man told him that he worshipped the fire only, and acknowledged no other God. At which answer, Abraham grew so zealously angry, that he threw the old man out of his tent, and exposed him to all the evils of the night, and an unguarded condition. When the old man was gone, God called to Abraham, and asked him where the stranger was. He replied, I thrust him away, because he did not worship thee. God answered him, I have suffered him these hundred years, though he dishonoured me; and wouldest thou not endure him one night, when he gave thee no trouble? Upon which, saith the story, Abraham fetched him back again, and gave him hospitable entertainment and wise instruction." "Go, thou," is Taylor's commentary, "and do likewise, and thy charity will be rewarded by the God of Abraham."

So attractively did he teach the virtues he prac-

tised; and to him belonged the precious privilege of making the man the commentator on the author. From his boyhood at Cambridge, to his youth in London, and the rich maturity of his manhood, he planted his feet in the steps of the King, who had beaten down the snow before him. His sojourn among men was a journey to angels; heaven was round him, not only when he entered the world, but when he left it. Always, and everywhere—as student, priest, and bishop—persecuted or triumphant—joyful or weary—he beheld lights and faces which dwell not in the common day, but shine down upon the traveller, who in the wilderness feels that he is in God’s work and in God’s house. So he went forward,

“By that vision splendid  
On darkest way attended.”

Some frailties, indeed, hung about him, for his nature had not yet been transfigured into that of the guardian-spirit who accompanied him, and in whose shadow he walked. This need not make any heart heavy. If we observe the moon on the side not illuminated by the sun, the reflection of the earth causes her to give a fainter light. The luminaries of piety are subject to similar obscurations, even when the Sun of Righteousness sheds over them His divinest splendour. On one side, the world comes between;—temper, pride, ambition,—each casts its little shade, and dims the clear circumference of beauty.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

- I. The eloquence of the church at the close of the 17th and during the 18th century; Tillotson.—II. Chillingworth and Cudworth.—III. Sancroft and the Nonjurors; Jeremy Collier.—IV. Beveridge and Sherlock.—V. Burnet.—VI. Character of Atterbury.—VII. Changes of public taste and opinion.—VIII. Warburton, Clarke, Seed, Blair, Paley.—IX. Conclusion.

A NEW style of pulpit eloquence began in Tillotson. Warburton—with a daring obliviousness of Pearson—called him the first city divine who talked rationally and wrote purely. Surviving Taylor twenty-seven years, and beholding all his descending lustre, he made no effort to catch any of his lights. He found more available materials in Barrow. Burnet ascribed to him the art of preserving the majesty of things under the simplicity of words. And it is not only curious, but instructive, to observe the rapidity and extent of his success. His most illustrious predecessors were lost in his shade. Addison used his name to give emphasis to a panegyric of style; and Dryden attributed his own vigour to the study of his works; a confession that excited the wonder of Gray, who admired the

prose of the poet almost as much as the verse. Nor was his reputation confined to his own country. Maury received him into his gallery as the first of English orators; and one of the noblest passages he wrote—"If God were not a necessary Being, He might almost seem to be made for the use and benefit of men," was plundered and melted down by Voltaire into a single line—

"Si Dieu n'existait, il faudroit l'inventer."<sup>1</sup>

He is most happy where he simplifies Barrow; for his manner has little symmetry or grace; he said, that to carve a beautiful image requires much art and dexterity, and his chisel has left few specimens of their application. Certainly, we do not recognise in him the characteristics of Dryden;—the employment of the simplest language with dignity, and the most adorned with ease. His doctrinal opinions have been severely handled; but his toleration was chiefly confined to a liberty of discretion in small matters.

He generally appears in a group of writers, of whom the names, more than the works, are familiar to modern ears — Chillingworth, Cudworth, and Whichcot. Chillingworth, indeed, died in the boyhood of Tillotson, and might, perhaps, more justly have claimed a niche in a former chapter; but the chain of intellectual relationship unites them. Remarkable, es-

<sup>1</sup> Sir James Mackintosh, who pointed out the plagiarism suggested Tillotson's original in the second chapter of Cicero's Treatise, *De Natura Deorum*.



pecially for the acuteness of his reasoning faculties, he possessed ample erudition, and knew how to set both on fire with occasional flames of a rough but impressive eloquence; striking the reader more forcibly, because it is unexpected. A fine image seems to disengage itself from his intricate paragraphs, like a shape of beauty winding through the dark walks and twisted trees of an old garden. Cudworth, with less lucidness of argument, resembled him in amplitude of observation. Leibnitz discovered in the 'Intellectual System,' great learning, but small reflection; and the quaint remark of Goodman may often be remembered with advantage, in the 17th century, as well as in our own; that, while reading only lifts us to the level of an author, meditation sets us upon his shoulders, and enables us to see further than he ever saw or could see. There is reason to regret that Cudworth did not bequeath to us less philosophy and more sermons. His discourse on the true nature of our Lord's Supper is composed with great massiveness and grandeur of language,—

“ Choice words and measured phrase, above the reach  
Of ordinary men, a stately speech.”

The life of Sancroft, upon whose fall Tillotson rose, forms a poetical episode in our church history. The author is shone upon by the man. Driven from his house at Lambeth, and unable to find an abiding place in London, he retired to a remote village to lay his white head on a cottage pillow;

leaving behind him for a vindication and an epitaph, —“In the great integrity of my heart, I did it.” Ken occupies a larger space in our literature. The slight remains of his pulpit exercises correspond with the simpleness and pathos of his rhymes, and contain a few passages of higher excellence. But of all the band that Sancroft led into poverty, Jeremy Collier, in a literary sense, is the most remarkable. An historian, learned and dignified; an essayist, combining with some of Montaigne’s sprightliness, the reflective attitude of Bacon; and a controversialist, who whipped Vanbrugh into decency, and made the pen tremble in the hand of Dryden. The fierceness of the bigot sometimes inflames the piety of the Christian; but the temper of his genius was not unlovely. He was descended from the old family of intellect, of which the 17th century beheld the decay, if not the extinction. The true children of those fathers, in all their majesty of stature and bloom of feature, we are not soon to behold. What has been said of the coming of a second Shakspeare is also applicable to a second Hooker. “Like the dew of the early morning, darkness must once more envelope the earth, before we can gaze on it again.”

The Nonjuring secession produced very important effects upon our theological literature. The fertility of the field remained, after the stream had flowed back into its accustomed channel. The antiquities and ritual of the Church were henceforward to be objects of research and interest; and the elaborate

investigations of modern scholars are the fruit of seed then scattered by poor and despised husbandmen, who did not take their hands from the plough, because the lines had fallen to them in rough places. Their biography is not brilliant; it makes no vehement appeal to our passions of astonishment or grief; and wants the elevation of the epic, not less than the pathos of the dramatic in history. Their struggles awake little of the sympathy that swells our hearts at the heroic deeds of the Reformation, or the suffering victims of Cromwell. But the sacrifices of principle have always in them something of a divine nature.

Beveridge contributed to the good work of enabling men to give a reason for the faith that was in them. His sincere homeliness was well calculated for impression. According to Nelson, he had a way of touching the consciences of his hearers, that seemed to revive the spirit of the apostolic age. Even more than Tillotson, he must have been instrumental in revolutionising the pulpit. If much was lost of splendour and variety, much also was gained in harmony and fitness. The virtues of the Gospel were illustrated by it. The chips of Seneca, and all his dry bundles of rhetoric, were swept aside. The keys of Peter no more

“A christen'd Jove adorn,  
Nor Pan to Moses lends his pagan horn.”

His sermons upon St. John, i. 29, and Psalm cxxii. 1, are excellent specimens of a manner which, instead

of confusing the mind by illustrations of truth, is contented with applying it. His exposition of doctrine is copious and animated; and if the reproof of Tillotson, that charity is better than rubrics, ever recur to our memory, it is soon forgotten in the dignity and glow of his devotion.

Sherlock, in the flower of his manhood at the death of Beveridge, found a way prepared for his own peculiar style. Gray mentioned to Nicholls his astonishment, that having produced some examples of pulpit eloquence unparalleled in their kind, he should have given no more. But these discourses were chiefly written when he was a young man, and his stormy career was unfavourable to the cultivation of the calmer graces of thought and composition. He was the first of a school that holds a secondary rank. In his writings, the science of method developed itself; gliding easily into the subject, he proceeds through a clear and agreeable review of the text to a vigorous expansion and application of it. He does not write his arguments in frost; the texture of the chain may often be traced throughout by the flame upon the links. Parr said that he had never seen the case of the Good Samaritan so admirably expounded. His knowledge of the human heart was deep, and broke upon the conscience with an irresistible assault. It comes out in plain remarks. "The pain and grief of mind which we suffer from having done ill, flow from the very constitution of our nature, as we are rational agents. Nor can we conceive a greater argument of God's utter irreconcilableness to sin,

than that he has given us such a nature, that we can never be reconciled to it ourselves." And in another sermon—"Put the case that a man was so framed by nature, as to hold out a thousand years in his native air, and to be hourly in danger of death in foreign parts, and at best able to hold out to sixty or eighty years,—how eager would such a man press homewards, if ever he found himself in another country?" Except when the wheels have become hot, his diction rolls on with a heavy and lumbering motion.

In some features of Sherlock we see a likeness to Burnet, who lived in the open air of political life, and hurled back, with no timid hand, the missiles he received. He has come down to us with a double character; sacred and profane; the bishop and the partizan. "However," wrote Bolingbroke to Swift, "I shall be able to convey several great truths to posterity so clearly and authentically, that the Burnets and Olmixons of another age may rail, but not be able to deceive." The minister of Christ's flock who sacrifices the Bible to politics, and plots when he ought to be praying, is justly rewarded with the sneer of the infidel. His restlessness, however, imparted warmth to his pen. He was one of the most popular preachers of his age; and the writer of a book,<sup>1</sup> now remembered only in the line of Pope, describes him as full of emotion, vehement in speech and gestures. He had some store of homely images; and an occasional

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Manley, in the *New Atalantis*.

ray of fancy shoots over his page. He possessed, moreover, a rude heartiness that looks like sincerity; but he was a hard, coarse man, in whom we feel no interest, and who would have been long ago forgotten, if he had not painted his own portrait, and enjoyed the opportunity of varnishing and hanging it.

Atterbury was Sherlock polished and refined. He might have been the preacher, as Pope was the poet, and Addison the essayist, of the 18th century. Like his celebrated friends, he had all the milder graces of genius, without its sublimity. The chased richness of our elder theology was not more pleasing to his taste, than the grotesque wonders of the *Arabian Nights*. He loved the elegant, the sparkling, and the smooth; and found the Augustan age of our language under the second Charles. His own diction was pure and limpid, with a happy negligence of phrase that delighted the ear and surprised the judgment. His poetic sense was quick and cultivated; and he might have excelled Waller in music, as much as he went beyond him in vigour. He translated Horace with the engaging vivacity of Cowley, and the apt neatness of Pope. In religious eloquence, the brightest triumphs were before him. He had a true notion of the necessary qualifications:—"To be a good preacher, nothing is wanting but a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, a vital sense of religion upon the heart, a desire of being useful to the congregation, and a resolution of saying nothing from the pulpit of which the preacher himself



is not already and fully convinced beforehand.”<sup>1</sup> Under any circumstances, the Press must have stripped his oratory of many charms. Steele, no incompetent witness in the externals of rhetoric, described his action as exquisitely noble; Swift, a higher authority, said that his pronunciation might have filled the ear of Longinus; and the poet Young regarded him as the finest preacher he had ever heard. Pope coupled him with Barrow; which was like comparing Ford with Jonson, or Titian with the Carracci; but in his own province of eloquence he might have filled as eminent a place. His pathos, purity, strong sense, and melody were indeed precious gifts. It would have been well for his happiness and fame if, as he loved to boast, he had contented himself with a corner and his book. He might, then, have added some sheep to the fold of the Good Shepherd; while the “meek Francis” of Prior, and the shameless intriguer of Burnet, faded from the eye.<sup>2</sup>

As the 18th century advanced, reverence for ancestral names in eloquence declined daily. Lord Bacon noticed, among his curious speculations, that

<sup>1</sup> Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of Rochester.

<sup>2</sup> Atterbury’s defence in the House of Lords contains passages of true eloquence. Do we not find in the following quotation the origin of a phrase, very notorious in recent history? “When once by such extraordinary steps as these, we depart from the fixed rules and forms of justice; and try untrodden paths, no man knows whither they will lead him, or where he shall be able to stop, when pressed by the crowd that follow him.”

the uttermost parts of shadows always seem to tremble; which he explains by the fluttering of little motes in the sunshine,—the shadows move because the medium moveth. And so it is with shadows thrown by Genius along the surface of public opinion; none, however broad or golden, continue unbroken. The light fancies and caprices of men — motes in the sunshine of taste — disturb the repose of the most majestic outlines. The reputation of the poet, the painter, and the divine is discomposed by the atmospheric influences of fashion; their invention, grace, or sublimity remain the same; for time cannot reduce their proportions; but the reflections are not suffered to be still; the shadows move, because the medium moveth. Thus the orb of Shakespere is obscured by the glittering lamps of Farquhar; and the solemnity of Taylor is scattered by the agile footstep of Sprat.

The eye, fresh from the ponderous tomes of Sanderson or Hammond, gazes in some bewilderment on the miscellanies and epigrams that followed them. Yet it was only in harmony with all history, that after the harvest should come the stubble. Here and there a patch of corn appeared; but neither large in quantity, nor of the sunniest growth. Warburton and Butler gathered some sheaves into the garner. The former, a zealous disciple of the ancient doctors, and having Hooker and Chillingworth bound up in small volumes, that they might be the companions of his walks; endowed with a rare

energy of frame, that enabled him to drive a plough over the stoniest field of antiquity; fond of paradoxes, yet so constructing them, that they seemed to emit fire from their gloom; laying no claim to the delicacies of composition, but often kindling into language that Hooker himself might have uttered.<sup>1</sup> The latter, a theological Aristotle, giving us chapters in sentences, and combining the awfulness with all the obscurity of the prophecy. Frequently eloquent in thought, seldom in word; and leaving upon his readers the impression, that every passage leads to the treasure. With the couplet of Pope in our mind, that

“ Words are like leaves, and where they most abound,  
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found,”

we feel that Butler wanted only words to make him perfect; and that a dipping in the language of Hobbes would have rendered him invulnerable. He lived at a season exactly suited to his constitution; whatever was connected with the reasoning faculties had taken root and flourished. Spenser and Hall were deposed; Pope and Clarke reigned in their stead.

The preacher had, indeed, to endure the sarcasm of the poet, indignant for the neglect of Bolingbroke; but his fame and honour were great. Hurd's character of him is not ill-drawn. Generally clear

<sup>1</sup> How vivid is the antithesis in the following paragraph :—  
“ The most successful impostors have set out in all the blaze of fanaticism, and completed their schemes amid the cool depth and stillness of politics.”—*Divine Legation of Moses*, B. iii., sect. 6.

and satisfactory in his exposition of Scripture; but always formal and uninteresting; without invention or dignity; neither expanding old thoughts, nor suggesting new. Such writers, as Clarke, are nearly useless for practical purposes, because they only show us our duty, without awaking any desire to perform it.

The sermons of Seed might seem to claim an exemption from this general description; but his influence was slight. Johnson said that he was not theological, but had a fine style; probably using the epithet in the sense of Burnet's criticism of Leighton.<sup>1</sup> His similes are sometimes extremely elegant, and the diction is, for the most part, chaste and agreeable; as in the following illustration of character:—"There are not many who can stand the test of a close inspection. Their virtues shine upon us at a distance; it is upon a nearer approach that we descry their failings. The distant ground which

<sup>1</sup> Not that Seed ever equalled the beauty of Leighton's imagery, who occasionally, as in his metaphorical description of prophecy, presents us with figures of Platonic amplitude and richness. "This sweet stream of their doctrine did as the rivers, make its own banks fertile and pleasant as it ran by, and flowed still forward to after ages, and by the influence of more such prophecies, grew greater as it went, till it fell in with the main current of the Gospel in the New Testament; both acted and preached by the great Prophet himself, whom they foretold to come, and recorded by his apostles and evangelists, and thus united into one river, clear as crystal. This doctrine of salvation in the Scriptures hath still refreshed the city of God, his church under the Gospel, and still shall do so, until it empty itself into the ocean of eternity."

is adorned with varieties of flowers seems to be all flower, and to glow with one continued and unmixed lustre; but if we were upon the spot, we should discover several weeds interspersed amidst such a beautiful assemblage of colours." Perhaps in the literature of the French pulpit, Fléchier might represent Seed, with some deductions in favour of the former.

One name of the 18th century stands out with prominent importance, and indicates its weather and temperature. The sermons of Blair gratified, while reflecting the age. Without imagination, learning, sensibility, or scriptural fulness, they made their way into universal favour. They met the wants of those who regarded religion merely as one branch of the whole duty of man; making no relentless claims on self-denial: supplying a compendious system of moral proprieties and observances;—worldly addresses to worldly men. Each sermon resembles a mechanical contrivance, in a polished case, and not easily put out of order. Some merits they certainly possess. The length is convenient, the arrangement easy, and the language perspicuous. They have no painful demands on the attention; the meaning lies on the surface; and giving no trouble, they excite no emotion. The imagery is trite, and the thoughts never concentrate into emphasis. There is no crisis in the argument. A sedate formality and a calm monotony of good sense pervade the whole. The style, musical and idiomatic, never swells into a hyperbole; or roughens

with one of those grotesque epithets or similes that we climb up in Andrewes and Donne, and from which, as the current of learned fancy sweeps round us, the eye takes in a wide reach of imagery. The sermons of Blair seem to have the same relation to the eloquence of the 17th century, that the paling bears to the park it encircles; decent, even, and useful, but entirely on the outside of nature.

On turning our eyes from Blair, there is something almost ridiculous in the struggling seriousness of Sterne. Shrewd, animated, not rarely pathetic, he more frequently appears to be tottering on the verge of laughter, and almost in the paroxysm of hurling his wig in the face of the congregation.<sup>1</sup> Religious life in his hands became a sentimental journey. He drew characters with liveliness and discrimination, and amazed the observer with a Shandean sketch in the train of the Apostles.

With the dawn of the 19th century, men of great powers and attainments rose into sight; and Lowth and Horsley held the torch before beautiful gates of imagery, of which sequestered learning had hitherto kept the key. Paley, too, followed the footsteps of Tillotson, and brought eloquence nearer to common life and business. His capacity was of its kind inimitable. Coleridge placed the crown of his ambition in making an approach to what he called the incomparable grace, propriety, and persuasive ease of his writings.

<sup>1</sup> The remark occurs in a letter of Gray.



Language is the medium for rendering thoughts visible; and Paley employs it only for that purpose; never throwing the light upon himself and obscuring the object. His clearness has detracted from his fame. The perfect transparency of the atmosphere appears to diminish the extent of the prospect, and causes remote objects to appear close under the eye. He might not inaptly be styled the Southey of Theology, having every quality but the highest. Once, at least, he reached this also. Parr thought the passage in the Moral Philosophy, beginning—"If Christ had delivered no other message"<sup>1</sup>—the noblest piece of prose in our language. No strain of similar dignity will be found in his sermons. His skill consisted in unlocking the treasures of other men, and taking out whatever he required. He borrowed from Butler, but did not sufficiently acknowledge the debt.

Throughout this season, in some points so abundant, the understanding was educated and enriched at the expense of the heart. The emotional was disunited from the argumentative in religion. The feelings were unregarded; the imagination was not cherished; curiosity was not attracted. Preachers assumed a stiff and magisterial air that effectually shut out sympathy; and the breathing frame of our religious eloquence, gradually losing its beauty and strength, wasted away into the gaunt wretchedness of the skeleton and death. Thus, another revolution

<sup>1</sup> B. v. chap. 9.

was to remodel the teaching of the pulpit; rebels from her laws were to recal the Church to the old ways of her founders; and to show that the ear is possessed in vain, unless it be used as a channel to the affections. It was in this combination of interest and instruction,—taking hold of the hand while they talked to the conscience,—that the preachers of the latter part of the 16th century, and nearly all the 17th, were so pre-eminently successful. This made Hooker, Taylor, and Barrow sources of illumination and heat; and enabled them, in the words of Cowley, to leave *bright tracks for following pens to take*. With them the race of inflammatory writers almost disappeared. Learned and ingenious men occupied their places; judicious, sober, practical; applauded by their contemporaries, because not superior to them. Now and then a flash of the old glories lighted up the dim windows of the Church; but it vanished as quickly as it rose. The age of law-givers was gone; the faces, once so radiant with spiritual communion, were covered by a veil; and twilight, along the high places of thought, alone remained, to show that the intellectual vision had been vouchsafed and withdrawn.

THE END.

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